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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

How foolish and premature were the joy-bells over the Cambrai victory has been only too well demonstrated in the days that followed. The battle for vital positions has raged furiously and with changing fortunes since we last wrote, and even now is far from being decided. Bourlon Wood, which not only commands observation of the roads and railway entering Cambrai from the North and West, but also overlooks from the rear the so-called Hindenburg switch-line past Queant and Bullecourt was a vital position for the enemy. If we could retain our observation here and consolidate our hold sufficiently to be able safely to bring up our heavy guns within effective range of the Cambrai communications, Cambrai and all it meant were lost to the Germans. Further south, at Lateau Wood and Masnières village we had cut off his road communications and threatened his railway communications with St. Quentin, Laon, and the rest of his southward line. That is why to the enemy it was a matter of life and death to eject us from the positions we had gained before he could bring up his reserves after the surprise attack of November 20th.

After persistent counter-attacks had failed to do more than drive us out of Bourlon village, he organised a large-scale offensive against the right and left flanks of the salient we had created. On the right we appear to have been caught napping, and in his first thrust he advanced at one point more than three miles, capturing Gouzeaucourt. Our counter-attacks partly restored the position, but the Germans recaptured Masnières and Lateau Wood, and we have lost our hold on the Cambrai-St. Quentin road. At the northern end of the salient, efforts to dislodge us from the Bourlon Wood were at the outset unsuccessful. Sir Douglas Haig was able to announce on Saturday that the main object of the Germans—viz., the encirclement of our forces—was completely defeated. But three days later Bourlon Wood had to be evacuated. The battle is not yet over. It is impossible that the present situation should remain stationary. General Byng's advance has compelled the Boche to a decisive issue, which we from this side can only watch with bated breath. Meanwhile at Passchendaele there is comparative inactivity. If the Cambrai attack had been launched

before the Italian disaster we might have had the man- and gun-power available to break through.

After several days of comparative calm, employed presumably by both sides in increasing their striking power, the enemy launched on Tuesday a renewed offensive against the Italian mountain sector of Asiago. So far as can be gathered from the official reports, it succeeded, at heavy cost, in wresting from the Italians certain advanced positions, the importance or unimportance of which it is impossible to deduce from the information afforded us. The point of attack is to the west of the Brenta river. The events of the next few days should determine whether the enemy has abandoned his effort further east, between the Brenta and the Piave, or will have sufficient forces to conduct a simultaneous offensive on either side of the former. A breach at either point would, of course, necessitate the surrender of the Piave line, and, with it, Venice; but there is at least better reason for optimism to-day than a week or two ago.

The British occupation of the colony that was formerly German East Africa is now complete. All that are left of the enemy forces in those regions have been driven over the Rovuma River into Portuguese territory. "German East" has ceased to exist as a political entity for many months past, but none the less the message stating that British "political officers are being appointed to all districts" will be a bitter pill for the German Colonial Minister, Solf, whose occupation is now utterly and entirely gone. Thanks in the first place to British sea-power, Germany is left without a single square foot of ground outside Europe upon which she can dump her Prussianising officials. There is, or was until quite recently, in Germany a "Central Africa" party. "Vere is dat barty now?"

Mr. Wilson's Message to Congress, *Verbosa et grandis epistola*, does little to clear the situation—no doubt it was purposely vague. The President reiterates America's will to win the war: but who enters a war except to win it? He disclaims, like Lord Lansdowne, the idea of punishing the German people for the crimes of their rulers, and announces that the Entente Powers are fighting to emancipate the peoples of Central Europe from the Kaiser's power, "this menace of combined intrigue and force . . . a thing without conscience or honour, or capacity for covenanted peace," which "must be crushed, and, if it be not utterly brought to an end, at least shut out from the friendly intercourse of nations." In short, Mr. Wilson invites the German people to get rid of the Kaiser, or if not, to face a commercial, social, and political boycott.

It is a bold bid for the support of the masses against the classes. More cautiously the President continues. "The worst that can happen to the detriment of the German people is this—that if they should still, after the war is over, continue to be obliged to live under ambitious and intriguing masters interested to disturb the peace of the world, or classes of men whom the other peoples of the world could not trust, it might be impossible to admit them to the partnership of nations which must henceforth guarantee the world's peace. That partnership must be a partnership of peoples, not a mere partnership of Governments. It might be

impossible also, in such untoward circumstances, to admit Germany to the free economic intercourse which must inevitably spring out of the other partnership of a real peace." An appeal of this kind might be a factor in the situation if the German people were allowed to read it; but they won't be allowed to read more than carefully selected passages, which, detached from the context, will appear merely provocative.

With some skill President Wilson eliminates Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria from the indictment of Germany, representing these Powers as the tools and vassals of the Kaiser. Mr. Wilson declares the intention of delivering Austria, the Balkans, and Turkey from "the impudent and alien dominion of the Prussian military and commercial autocracy," and says quite explicitly, "we do not wish in any way to impair or to rearrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire." This commonsense statement is welcome, because we have frequently expressed our own view, that if we are going to fight until the map of Eastern Europe is rearranged on the lines of nationalities, the war would last to the crack of doom. Unfortunately the war cannot be brought to an end by presidential messages, or ministerial speeches, or letters to the newspapers. The stricken field, and the shortness of food or munitions, are arguments of more pith and puissance than all the letters or speeches in the world.

President Wilson's "partnership of peoples to guarantee peace" is, of course, identical with Lord Lansdowne's Pact of Nations to enforce peace, and it is amusing to see that the very newspapers which empty the vials of their wrath on Lord Lansdowne are cap in hand to Mr. Wilson. The only difference between the two may be—for it is not quite clear—that Germany would be outside Mr. Wilson's partnership, unless the Kaiser is dethroned, while Lord Lansdowne would invite the Kaiser to join the League. The President has declared war unto death on the Kaiser, while he beckons lovingly to the German people. But as the Kaiser happens to be in possession of the machine, the wisdom of this attitude is doubtful. Austria may perhaps ask to be delivered from her friends, for the President, in the same breath that he says he does not wish to dismember Austria, declares war upon her.

One passage in the Message to Congress recalls what must for ever puzzle the historian, namely, why did Germany go to war? As Mr. Wilson reminds the world, Germany had everything that an ambitious and pushing nation could desire before the war: she had spread her commercial relations all over the world; she was the honoured guest in Great Britain, the United States and the British Colonies. The German businessman was omnipresent and almost omnipotent in London and New York; in South Africa he controlled the gold mines, which British enterprise and capital had discovered. In Australia he controlled the metal trade, and to some extent the wool trade. In the shipping world the German lines were allowed to undercut British freights, and to drop mails and passengers outside Southampton so as to escape harbour dues. In another twenty years Germany would really have conquered the world by "peaceful penetration." Yet they were not satisfied. The Crown Prince and his train of copper captains were bent on blood, and now they have got their bellyful.

The Earl of Shelburne, afterwards first Marquis of Lansdowne, of the Petty-Fitzmaurice creation—for Pope's friend "Granville the polite" was also Lord Lansdowne some seventy years earlier—is described by Lord Beaconsfield as one of "the suppressed characters of history." After the fall of Lord North, and the sudden death of Lord Rockingham in 1782, Lord Shelburne formed the Government, with young Pitt as Chancellor of the Exchequer, which signed the treaty of Peace recognising the independence of the American colonies. The Ministry only lasted a few months, and was succeeded, first by the Coalition of North and Fox, and then by Pitt's Government. Lord Shelburne was not invited to join, for neither Fox nor Pitt could work with "the Jesuit of Berkeley Square," as he was called.

Everybody admitted Lord Shelburne's ability and information, but nobody trusted him. Pitt consoled him with a marquise, and he bought from Lord Bute, who was driven out of town by the politicians, the house which his descendant now occupies.

Everybody is racking his brain to find out what was the motive which prompted Lord Lansdowne to throw his peace bomb at the Government at this particular moment. According to some Lord Lansdowne is acting as a bonnet for the Prime Minister; according to others it is a deep-laid plot to bring Mr. Asquith back, hatched by Lord Grey, who has been staying, they say, at Bowood, and Lord Loreburn, who was at Balliol with Lord Kerry. Others will have it that Lord Lansdowne formed a pact with *The Nation*, which certainly did appoint him Prime Minister a week before the explosion. Others, again, more bluntly and coarsely declare that the Whig chieftain is too old to know what he is about, which is absurd enough, seeing that the Lord Chancellor is several years older, that Palmerston was Prime Minister at eighty, and that Gladstone was eighty-two when he formed his last Government. Is there not a simpler, certainly a more charitable, explanation, namely, that Lord Lansdowne believed what he said to be for the good of his country? We do not agree with Lord Lansdowne: but we see no reason to suspect his honesty or his sanity.

Agreements for the division of spoils before they are secured look mighty foolish when published to the world in cold print. France, Russia, and England have been amusing themselves since the outbreak of war in cutting up Eastern Europe and Asiatic Turkey: all the details are complete, except the trifling one of getting possession of the divided lands. The secret documents published at Petrograd by the Bolsheviks are like stale love letters, very painful reading. Russia at Constantinople—that dream is gone. In the spring of 1916 an agreement was made by which Russia was to obtain from Turkey Erzurum, Trebizond, Van, Bitlis, and Southern Kurdistan: France was to get the Syrian littoral; and Great Britain was to get Southern Mesopotamia, with Baghdad, and the ports of Haifa and Akka on the Syrian coast. Alexandretta was to be made a free port, and between the English and French zones a new Arabian State, with its capital at Mecca, was to be created.

Most wonderful of all is the account of the bribes of territory that were successively offered to Greece to induce her to fulfil her treaty obligation to assist Serbia against Bulgaria. South Albania (except Avlona), acquisitions in the Aidin vilayet, even Cyprus, were one after the other pressed on Greece to induce her to join the Allies; and for three years Constantine and his wife fooled us. Is it not the very "Dunciad" of diplomacy? Meanwhile Bulgaria, assisted by Germans, was conquering Serbia, and a large Entente Army was being locked up at Salonika. If we were too squeamish to use force, Tino and his delectable spouse should have been invited to lunch on board the Admiral's flagship at the Piræus, and the flagship should have steamed softly away to Malta, which is a nicer winter climate than Switzerland or the Italian lakes. But none of our statesmen or commanders have any imagination!

What is to be done with that large portion of the Eastern world that lies between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf? We have not got it yet; but we are getting on, and discussion of its future government is not so ridiculous as carving up an imaginary Europe. It is quite clear that Mesopotamia cannot be governed from Downing Street. Our Government will have enough to do to govern the British Isles, without taking on a new empire of great size, without roads, drains, or railways. Lord Robert Cecil says: Judæa for the Jews, Armenia for the Armenians, Arabia for the Arabs, and Turkey for the Turks. That sounds well enough, but in practice we fear it would mean confusion, if not racial warfare, for the next half century.

It is not a question of handing back any conquests that we may make to the Turks, but rather of employing the Turks as farmers of their own country under a British Protectorate. We are prejudiced against the Turks just now, because a small clique of Levantines at Constantinople have dragged them into the war on the side of Germany. The setting up of a new Arabian province or caliphate, with its centre at Mecca, will drive a wedge into Islamism, and will almost certainly provoke a race war between Turks and Arabs. If we have to choose between Turks and Arabs, the Turks, if properly handled, are far more honest and reliable. Is there any material for the creation of an Armenian State? As for the idea of Judæa for the Jews, *credat Judæus Apella*.

The plain truth is that "Dora," like most autocratic females, has got herself into a mess. There is no rational distinction between an article or letter in a newspaper and a leaflet. According to their own accounts, the great newspapers have a circulation far wider than any pamphlet or leaflet could hope to attain. Nor does the price make the difference, for it is impossible to publish a leaflet at less than a halfpenny. Every newspaper is as much a propagandist of its own views as any individual, and Lord Lansdowne has put Sir George Cave and the Censor in a hopelessly illogical position. That in Lord Lansdowne's but a "choleric word" which in the Pacifist is "flat blasphemy." These are the difficulties in which Pitt and Sidmouth became involved, and which entangle all Governments that set out to suppress freedom of speech.

Three months ago the SATURDAY REVIEW drew abuse from several quarters for calling attention to the disloyalty of the French Canadians. To-day our fears are more than realised, for the general election in Canada shows the province of Quebec to be the black speck in the empire. If Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Bourrassa get a majority over Sir Robert Borden, the Canadian troops at the front may be recalled. We may be sure that they would not obey the summons; but there is an appalling certainty that after the war there will be a civil war in Canada. This danger, now coming to a head, is due to our absurd indulgence towards the French-Canadian priesthood, and to our permission of French as an official language. Priestcraft and language are two infallible preservatives of separatism.

The most interesting statement made by Mr. Bonar Law to the delegates of the National Union was that he had remonstrated with the Prime Minister on the appointment of Mr. Winston Churchill to the Ministry of Munitions. The Prime Minister, it appears, replied that, as he did not object to Mr. Bonar Law's friends, Mr. Bonar Law had better not object to Mr. Lloyd George's friends. This throws a curious light on the Coalition, and illustrates rather unpleasantly the subjection of the Unionists, who are far the largest party in the House of Commons, to Mr. Lloyd George's imperious will. We have much sympathy with Mr. Bonar Law's domestic sorrows, which are enough to disarm any man for the war of politics. At the same time, it is necessary that the party, which has a large majority in both Houses of Parliament, should stand up to Mr. Lloyd George.

The financial position of the Middlesex Hospital, as disclosed in the speech of Mr. Edmund Davis, is probably that of most of the other metropolitan hospitals. The Middlesex is frankly living on an overdraft from its bankers; and if, as we conjecture, the other hospitals are doing the same, the outlook is alarming. It is, of course, true that the war has cut off many subscriptions, and thrown a great many extra patients into the hospitals. But we are afraid that charitable subscriptions will not be resumed on the old scale after the war, for everybody will be poorer, and taxation is more likely to increase than diminish. The great voluntary hospitals are slowly drifting on to the rates, and they will have to be taken over by the State or the County Council. More bureaucracy!

The Soane Museum, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, whose treasures the SATURDAY REVIEW described in a recent article, is closed for the next four months. When we say closed, we do not mean that the shutters are put up, and entrance absolutely denied. But anyone who wishes to pass an hour or so in this little fairyland of art must address himself personally or by letter to the curator, which no one is likely to do.

Lunching the other day at a quiet club we described in a corner, opposite an officer in khaki, the King of Portugal. We could not help surmising what were the thoughts of the head of the House of Braganza, the oldest royal family in Europe. Probably his Majesty was thinking of the toughness of his mutton chop, for kings are amazingly mortal. But there passed through our mind the reflection that if his ancestress, Catherine of Braganza, had not been, as Dryden described her, "A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care,"

James II. had never reigned, and we should have escaped Dutch William and German George. There will be a good many kings in exile after this war. Will they all assemble in an hotel in Venice to see the Carnival, as Candide met them? Will there be a Venice?

The practice of swearing is being revived in its ugliest forms. Wellington and Melbourne made "damning" fashionable; but under the frown of a prim Court the habit died away. Nowadays, the word "hell," which formerly was not mentioned "to ears polite," is of everyday use. A member of Parliament recently asked the Prime Minister "whether he meant to give hell to the Germans, etc." We should like to have seen Peel's face if such a question had been put when he was in the chair. The sanguinary expletive with which, in the mouth of a young lady, Bernard Shaw made a hit in one of his last plays would miss its mark to-day from familiarity.

In "Vignettes of the Regency" Mr. William Toynbee tells a capital story of Lord Melbourne. A deputation waited on the Prime Minister to complain of their discourteous reception by his brother, George Lamb, the Under-Secretary for the Home Department. "What did he say?" asked the Prime Minister soothingly of the spokesman. "Why, my lord, he damned me and my grievance, and my petition; in fact, he damned everybody and everything!" "Well, damn it," said Lord Melbourne rising from his chair, "what more could he do?" If we had a Minister who would receive a deputation in that way to-day, he might save the country and win the war.

We learn on credible authority that Count Torby, son of the Grand Duke Michael, so well-known and justly respected in this country, applied for a commission in the British Army. The offer was refused, on the ground that "it might create an unfavourable impression"—amongst whom? Amongst the scum and off-scourings of the earth, amongst miscreants who, having deposed their Sovereign and banished him and his family, just recovering from typhoid fever, to the swamps of a Siberian village, having murdered their officers, and ravished their wives, having robbed landlords, and plundered banks, have finally betrayed us to Germany! And these are the allies of Great Britain, to whom the House of Commons, on the motion of the Prime Minister, sent "fraternal greetings" and "heart-felt congratulations"!

At ten minutes to five on Thursday morning, with a bright moon and a biting frost, the London world and his wife were turned out of their beds by the alarm whistle, which in some parts of the town was replaced by a stentorian voice shouting "Air raid!" The noise of the firing lasted over an hour, and was not so alarming as the last raid: but it proved more effective, as is shown by the fact that two machines were brought down and their entire crews captured alive. As they returned shivering to their blankets there was probably not a man or woman who did not wonder what Lord Lansdowne meant when he said that we don't wish to annihilate Germany.

LORD LANSDOWNE AND MR. WILSON.

THE Presidential Message seems to differ from Lord Lansdowne's letter in this, that while Lord Lansdowne harps upon security, Mr. Wilson insists upon reparation, which, however, apparently means little more than restitution of occupied territory, for both renounce vindictive or punitive damages. Now that the malice and scurrility of the Press and the clubs are exhausted, we take leave to say that the publication of Lord Lansdowne's letter has done good. Of the five propositions with which Lord Lansdowne concludes, the first seems to us to be untrue; the second possibly true only of Great Britain and Italy; the third doubtful; the fourth purely mischievous; and the fifth worthy of discussion. We cannot therefore be ranked amongst Lord Lansdowne's supporters; but individual courage is so rare in our public men that we thank him for daring to say what he thinks. This famous epistle has done good, because it has set men on thinking; it has pointed out to them that they have miscalculated, and must lower their demands: it has shaken off the yoke of a censored Press and a muzzled Parliament; it has asserted the right of every Briton to say what he likes about peace and war, provided he speak no treason against the King, and give no comfort or aid to his enemies. Though we disagree with most of Lord Lansdowne's conclusions, he has broken the neck of "Dora," and for that we are duly grateful.

Lord Lansdowne is entitled to be tried at the bar of public opinion for what he has written, not for what the newspapers say he has written. Lord Lansdowne does not suggest that we should make peace now. On the contrary, he says, "We are not going to lose this war," and he winds up by including himself in "those who pray, but can at this moment hardly venture to hope, that the New Year may bring us a lasting and honourable peace." By the expression "New Year" we do not understand him to mean the 1st of January, but the year 1918. Is there anyone who will come forward and say he does not join in that prayer?

Let us examine Lord Lansdowne's five propositions.

(1) "That we do not desire the annihilation of Germany as a Great Power." This is what lawyers call common form, and less polite people call conventional cant. We do most heartily desire the annihilation of Germany as a Great Power, but experience has forced us to ask whether the price of our desire might not be too high.

(2) "That we do not seek to impose upon her people any form of government other than that of their own choice." Great Britain and Italy are the only two constitutional monarchies in the war, and we doubt whether France and the United States would accept Lord Lansdowne's *dictum*. Mr. Wilson's Message is merely a variant on "no peace with the Hohenzollerns"; and after the nonsense that has been talked by our Prime Minister about the Russian Revolution, we should be much relieved to hear that the Entente has abandoned the notion of setting up republics in Central Europe.

(3) "That except as a legitimate war measure we have no desire to deny to Germany her place among the great commercial communities of the world." This is another doubtful proposition: it is not in accord with the resolutions of the Paris Economic Conference, or with the Bills for the control of metals and imports and exports now before Parliament. Mr. Wilson expressly declares that unless Germany becomes democratised, and puts away emperors, he will not assist her commercial rehabilitation. Once more the note of cant jars. We do desire to exclude Germany from our markets, so far as it may be done without injuring ourselves, and we risk the prophecy that for the next decade, at least, Germany will be so excluded.

(4) "That we are prepared, when the war is over, to examine in concert with other Powers the group of international problems, some of them of recent origin, which are connected with the question of 'the freedom of the seas.'" This proposition is wholly mischievous. In the high seas there is no property or dominion, any more than in the air or in running water. But the ports of every country are its private property, and three

miles from the coast of every country the sea is called territorial water, and is by convention regarded as part of the country. There are a number of rules—they are not laws, as they are not enforceable in a court of law—which govern the right of search and capture on the high seas in time of war. "Freedom of the seas," in the mouths of Germans and neutrals, means (a) that the ports of every country shall be open to the ships of every other country: (b) that the territorial waters of every country shall be open to the fishermen and carriers of every other country: (c) that on the high seas neutrals shall be allowed to carry enemy goods: (d) that a blockade shall be confined to the ports and coasts of the enemy: (e) that the blockading forces must not bar access to neutral ports and coasts: (f) that, while the neutral flag cannot cover contraband of war, under no circumstances can a long list of articles be declared contraband, among them being cotton, wool, silk, jute, raw materials of textile industries, oil, copra, rubber, hides, manures, metallic ores, soda ash, caustic soda, salt cake, ammonia, sulphate of copper, machinery, etc. It would be madness on our part to discuss these claims, the main points of the Declaration of London, which Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey accepted in the name of Britain in 1909, but which they were obliged to renounce as soon as war broke out, because they are indeed incompatible with our existence as a great Maritime Power. Lord Loreburn, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, professes to understand by Lord Lansdowne's proposition that we should discuss the question of submarines. Lord Loreburn must know better than that. So far from examining with other Powers the question of the freedom of the seas, we must re-enact, without delay, the Navigation Laws, which we foolishly repealed in 1849.

(5) "That we are prepared to enter into an international pact under which ample opportunities would be afforded for the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means." This proposition is the same as the President's partnership of peoples to guarantee peace. We agree that no pact with Germany is any security: but this would be a pact with a group of Powers (in the event of the Hohenzollerns remaining, Germany, according to Mr. Wilson, would be outside), and though it would not be a good security, it is the best obtainable at this stage of the world's progress. The experiment might fail, as it has failed before: but it is always worth trying, and certainly worth discussing. Even if no agreement or pact should be found practicable, the discussion could do nothing but good, as it would tend to create an international public opinion, which one day, though not to-morrow, will be as powerful as municipal public opinion. The interests of Britain are at the two ends of the long line of war, in Belgium and at Baghdad. When the Germans are cleared out of Belgium and France, and if we retain Baghdad and the river mouths, the other world problems may settle themselves as they please. To go on wading through slaughter to bankruptcy in order that Slavs or Jugoslavs or Poles or Ruthenians or Roumanians may get some form of republic or some slice of territory is madness or crime.

THE GERMANS IN AFRICA.

AFTER a resistance, which in fairness we must call enterprising and resourceful, the Germans have been cleared out of East Africa, and except, perhaps, for a few roving predatory bands in the wilds of the Portuguese tropics, there is nothing left of a great German Empire several times as large as Germany in Europe. The South African Dutch have loyally co-operated with us in this great achievement. The military skill of General Smuts, loyally backed by General Botha, contributed greatly to our success, but we need not forget that 80 per cent. or so of the forces sent by the Union were of British blood, and that the British Navy was the foundation on which our scheme of conquest was built up.

Now that we have got this great empire, what are we to do with it? Are we to return it to Germany?

Or are we to make it a part of the British Empire? The German answer to these questions is, that we shall have to give it all back as one of the conditions of their victorious peace. There is also a school in this country which says, that as we did not enter into the war for gain, we must renounce all conquests and return their Africa to the Germans, in order to vindicate British altruism.

We understand the German point of view. If we are beaten to a peace in Europe we shall be compelled to give the Germans back their colonies, but we may be forgiven if we still refuse to make that presumption and continue to count on peace with victory. The question which we desire to consider is, at all events, what should we do with German Africa supposing we are able to keep it?

The German African colonies, as we all know, consist of four territories. German South-west Africa is an enormous tract of land on the western flank of the Union. Lord Salisbury would no doubt have described it as light soil, but the South African Dutch, who are more expert in these matters, report that it is excellent grazing ground, and it is certainly true that before the Germans went there it was occupied by pastoral tribes, who owned great herds of beautiful cattle. These tribes were, not to put too fine a point on it, exterminated by what it is now-a-days the fashion to call German militarism. The Hereros were driven wholesale into the Kalahari Desert by an act of deliberate German policy, and their bones, we suppose, bleach there to this day. What the Germans intended to do with the country which they thus depopulated makes an interesting speculation. Their agricultural settlements were certainly not a success, but in one tract of riversand they found widespread deposits of a small but pure diamond, a discovery which saved their colony from utter bankruptcy. Probably, however, the chief purpose of the Germans was to use the country as a base for the conquest of South Africa at some future time. Their railway system, points to that conclusion. It was an arrow aimed at Kimberley, and it is said that their military scheme included the mobilisation and transport of the Germans in South America, 50,000 of whom were to land in Williamshaven and force the drifts of the Orange River.

So at least the Dutch suspect. They never liked the German as a neighbour, and we were by no means surprised to hear that they are determined to make the whole colony a part of the Union. If we were to make peace with Germany on a basis of giving her back German South-West Africa, we should certainly have to reckon with her brother Boer.

Those who desire to give Germany back her colonies on the score of humanity would not wish to enter into a new war with the South African Dutch, so they would naturally turn to Germany's tropical possessions. When, however, we turn to the Cameroons we are confronted with a story which might make the humanitarian turn pale. How Mr. E. D. Morel failed to get wind of it we are at a loss to imagine, for it might have furnished him with an even more sensational sequel to his sensational "Red Rubber." But Mr. Morel and his friend Roger Casement, for some inscrutable reason, took no interest in any atrocity which did not tend to embroil us with Belgium. The story, however, is told in a drier, but probably more accurate, style, by the compilers of a Blue Book which was issued in July, 1916, on German atrocities in Africa. We might supplement that Blue Book with a little ancient history. When the Germans took the Cameroons they found two peaceful and semi-civilised tribes, the Akwas and the Dualas, living happily enough together on the banks of the Duala River. These tribes considered themselves sufficiently protected in their rights and property by a treaty signed by the German Government which secured them in both. The site, however, was found very useful for the German capital, and the tribes were cleared out in spite of their scrap of paper. Their huts were burned and they were driven away from the river which was their main source of livelihood, without even the shadow of compensation. The chiefs in their innocence appealed to the German Reichstag, and

Governor Puttkamer's reply was to sentence them to varying terms of imprisonment. Flogged, robbed, and reduced to poverty, they had no choice but to submit and work for the Germans, and from this wretched state they were delivered only by the recent British occupation.

But they were not all delivered. The first act of the Germans on the outbreak of war was to hang a large number of the Duala chiefs, and the military commandant ordered the extermination of the whole Duala tribe. The ghastly story of what our troops discovered when they entered the Cameroons is told in the Blue Book, and we do not propose to inflict these horrors upon our readers, hardened as they may be by recent experiences. If our humanitarian friends propose to hand back the Cameroons to the Germans, they will have to hand back also the cowering, shrinking, and mutilated remnants of those once happy tribes.

But German policy in Togoland and East Africa very closely resembles German policy in the Cameroons. There is good evidence to show that those territories have been depopulated in many places by the native fear of German cruelty. The population of the neighbouring British colonies has increased in proportion. Except for the Askari, who is recruited from cannibal or warrior tribes, and was allowed, as a condition of military service, to loot, rape and murder at his own free will, the natives of Africa cry out for deliverance from the German.

We may then dismiss specious German pleas of humanity and justice as inappropriate to the case. There remains the question of what value these colonies are to us. In the first place there is obviously a strategic advantage, for the German has shown himself to be in all parts of the world a very dangerous neighbour. And what of their commercial value? The world needs food, and this war has shown the value especially of those foods which are made from palm kernels. Those who know tropical Africa say that its undeveloped vegetable wealth is one of the food factors of the future. East Africa, moreover, is a great grazing country, and there are besides enormous forests of fine timber on the lower slopes of its vast mountain regions.

If we consider the question from the broadest point of view we see that German development in Africa was along routes from east to west, which were intended to cut our lines of communication between north and south. The Germans had actually cut that line, and were undoubtedly preparing themselves for a great struggle for the future of Africa, which may be, although most people do not see it as yet, of vast importance to the future of the whole world. Is it wise, considering the money we have spent in this war and the debt we have piled up, to throw away our command of a region at present almost uncultivated and uninhabited, the value of which is now at prairie level, but if developed might contribute, in some measure at least to the cost of the war?

DEAR BRUTUS AND DEAR BARRIE.

DEAR BRUTUS, which has now thoroughly settled down at Wyndham's Theatre, is perhaps the most charming and original play produced in the last three years. It is, moreover, a popular play—so popular that Mr. Gerald Du Maurier is able to disappear from the cast without imperilling its reception. Popularity is quite the most remarkable of Sir James Barrie's dramatic gifts. By popularity we mean the power to move by one and the same stroke people of many different classes and types and educations—the most indispensable of powers in a dramatist, and certainly the rarest. No one since Shakespeare has had this gift to such a degree as Sir James Barrie. There are sometimes dramatists who appeal to people of education and taste; there are always dramatists who appeal quite frankly to the vulgar; but there is only very rarely a dramatist who can appeal with an equal ease and felicity to the many and to the few—to the people who admire the works of Mr. Anthony Ellis and the people who admire the works of Anton Chekoff. There is rarely, in fact, any play which is

really popular in the sense that *Romeo and Juliet* was popular in the days when it was produced as its author wrote it, or in the sense that *Dear Brutus* is popular to-day. Most plays are a compromise between the best and the worst in an audience, which is one of the reasons why most plays are a failure. Their authors achieve the general appeal we have in mind—the appeal to all levels of temperament and intelligence—by taking extreme pains not to be too much above one section of their audience or too remote in their interest from another section, thus contriving to fill the upper circle without emptying the stalls. But this sort of popularity is not born, but made, and it is never safe. Those who practise it cannot, like Sir James Barrie, assume that they have only to do their best and that then they cannot fail to enrapture all sorts and conditions of men. Barrie, simply by doing the best in his power, is always sure to succeed. The better his play, the more popular it is certain to be. His plays are a confutation of the doctrine to which so many able men of the theatre are driven for a refuge—the doctrine that supreme excellence necessarily condemns a dramatic author to obscurity. The curious thing about a Barrie play is that the scenes which best please the discerning are also those which please his most uncritical admirers. His popularity with the multitude is spoiled—never, as in the case of so many authors of repute, by his finer strokes, but by his own derelictions and limitations. He is in the happy position of the perfect citizen according to Polonius; he has only to be true to himself and he cannot then be false to any man. And the truth which he thereby achieves (this is the standing wonder of it) is on a level with the best which our modern theatre has to show.

What is the secret of this popularity? To begin with, Sir James Barrie by the very nature of his talent avoids most of the difficulties which beset the ordinary dramatic author. He does not, for example, write the comedy of manners, which by the nature of things usually succeeds in depicting one class of society in proportion as it fails in depicting another. He does not appeal essentially to the intellect, and therein he is particularly fortunate, for intellectual understandings can only be reached with intellectual people, who are not sufficiently numerous to support the theatre for one week in fifty-two. He does not attempt the pinnacles of tragedy or adventure into the labyrinths of human psychology, and thereby misses alike the lonely excellence of the one great man in a century and the eclectic fame of a theatrical pleasant Sunday afternoon. His excellence does not even lie in that veracious painting of character and appreciation of the ironies of life which are the essence of our modern English comedy at its best; and here, again, Sir James is more fortunate than Mr. Haddon Chambers (whose saving graces in this regard were recently so happily exhibited at the Garrick Theatre) and other of our comic dramatists who risk at least two failures in three plays.

Sir James has the good fortune to excel in two directions where excellence is bound to be popular. We may call his twin gifts quite simply fancy and fun.

First as to fancy. All the critics and not a few of the poets have agreed that fancy must be very sharply distinguished from imagination, though not all of them have agreed exactly how the distinction should be drawn. "Ever let the fancy roam," sang a poet who is at present a good deal in our thoughts; and here we have as good a key as any supplied by the deeper Coleridge or the more methodical Hazlitt. Fancy is an illuminative escape from the discipline of life in the same sense that good punning is an escape from the discipline of language. Fancy may almost be defined as a punning of the mind—a tendency to find surprising analogies and contrasts in unexpected ways. Children have it in abundance because their world has not yet been reduced to intellectual order: their mental activities are not bounded by the hard classifications of mature thought. Fancy invented

Moth, Cobweb, and Mustard Seed, and the magic loves and jealousies of Titania, Lysander, and Demetrius. But it was imagination which conceived Hamlet's ghost and the real loves and jealousies of Romeo and Leontes. We are not merely drawing attention to the fact that fancy gets away from the actual forms of common life and shows us fairies. Imagination does that as well. There is fancy in Titania; there is imagination in the witches of Macbeth; but both are supernatural. The real difference lies in the fact that a child could have invented Titania if it had had the genius to do so; for in Titania the poet plays with a passion which he need never have understood. No one, on the other hand, could have imagined the witches in Macbeth who had not entered into the heart of human life either by virtue of actual suffering or a marvellous intuitive sympathy. Fancy invents her creatures, and invention is not a faculty we get either from experience or greatness of heart or wideness of understanding. Imagination does not invent: it perceives and it reveals.

Fancy, where there is genius behind it, is bound to appeal to all kinds of people. It goes behind the varying experience, the diverse intelligence, all the different orders of brain and heart collected together in an audience, and appeals straight to our original and common love of the invented fairy stories of childhood. When we have allowed that Sir James possesses this gift of fancy to a degree which can only be described as genius we have explained his popularity. When we add, without further comment (which space forbids), that he possesses also the equally popular gift of fun (which is to humour what fancy is to imagination) we need hardly look further to explain his vogue on two continents and in more than one language.

Dear Brutus shows us the twin gifts of Sir James Barrie at their best; it also shows their limitations. Where fancy is free to do her work without any reference to what the old and the wise have learned about life or suffered in the fires of experience the play is supremely felicitous, and instantly appeals to us all. Lob and his magic wood where people have their second chance, all the apparatus of the adventure enjoyed by the characters and their awakening when it is over—all this is delightfully invented and executed. All those passages of the play where its people happily trifle with crimes, infidelities, and failures are engagingly full of fun, and it is significant of fancy's part in the play that the fun is in the last resort based on our sense of the contrast between the reality of these things and their sportive treatment by the author—a treatment which levels all down to the nursery, where children are never wicked but only naughty, and where deserted love just hides in the corner and cries. Unfortunately, however, the author does not always keep within fancy's realm. In most of his plays he introduces scenes where his children are required to put away their childhood, and on every such occasion his audiences are suddenly aware that something has gone wrong. The author has abandoned his gifts and attempted something alien to his mind and heart. In *Dear Brutus* we are most aware of our author's lapse in the scene between the Dearths. The actual tragedy of their two lives has to be suggested in a scene where there is hardly a touch of truth or of any of that art which in the fanciful passages so entirely delights us. Another passage is where the Purdies, after so beautifully waking up, begin to moralise the spectacle. We realise in these scenes that Barrie, the genius of fun and fancy, can be tedious as a moralist and false and clumsy as an interpreter of the heart. In Lob's Wood we can almost imagine ourselves in that other wood, near Athens, which his play so gratefully resembles. He is able to accompany even Shakespeare into such regions as this, but not an inch further. Here we return to our original discovery that Barrie is popular where he is most himself, and that he only fails, artistically and in other ways rather less important, when he gets outside his natural endowment. So long as his plays have

in them a touch of Peter or a glimpse of Cinderella they are sure of their effect. Otherwise they run the risks which attend the work of all the other dramatists. We may divide his work according to the title of one of his earlier essays in fiction, putting our Tommy upon the right hand and our Grizel upon the left. Tommy is the immortal child of popular description—the boy who would never grow up. We will only say of Grizel, in whatever disguise she may happen to emerge, that she invariably seems to us to be all too correctly named.

FANTASIA UPON AN OLD TUNE.

"DIES IRAE, DIES ILLA . . ."

NO sound rose from over the long, furrowed plain but the crackling of scarred ice in the stray pools.

The day was ending, and under the high shadowy vapours which crept so slowly over the pale sky that they appeared scarcely to move at all, the plain, streaked with powderings of dry snow, wan in the half-light, assumed an aspect of extreme age and indifference. . . .

To the left and perhaps half a mile away a swelling of the ground was surmounted by some score of wry poplars amid which stood a black and belfried monastery. Bleakly and steeply silhouetted against the hueless sky it had the appearance of a fort or a prison, and from its castellated upper storeys the unsatisfied eye traversed the round of an horizon upon which nothing was encountered save the slight unevenness in the furrowed back of the plain. An arrowy road passed along the base of this hillock away to that remote edge of the world where it seemed the plain was rounded off into space, and from which a wind of inappreciable volume but chilliest temperature was now blowing.

Nothing sounded save the occasional drifting whisper of wry grass, that had been turned over by last year's plough; nothing moved save the creeping sky, until the sick sun, emerging into a mist-veiled chasm of the clouds, lit for a moment with an uncertain radiance the darkling plain. At this visitation a multitude of faint, warm tints glowed out, and certain objects that had formerly appeared blurred and indistinguishable in the general mass acquired significance. A faint crying, too, became audible from among the objects which everywhere littered the ground. . . .

Chief among these, and one proclaiming in simple terms the aftermath of battle, lay a broken ammunition waggon of field artillery. One wheel of it was tilted into the air, the other slanted—crushed. About its limber, now reduced to a chaos of dingy, steel plates and old iron, sprawled the horse team, slaughtered, upon their sides, with hooves awry, eyes glazed, and with dilated nostrils snothered in pestilential blood. In ever-widening irregular circles about this wreck lay, like bundles of old clothes, the sorely wounded, the dying, and the dead. . . .

The sun that had revealed, with a certain grave brevity, this episode of war, sublime even in its squalor, submerged his disc again amid vapour; but the cry which had greeted this illumination became reiterant, and arose from every side.

A huge man, stiff with cold and wounds, was supporting himself upon one knobbed hand against the limber, while with the other he traced, by means of a signal flag, uncertain figures upon the air. To him from all quarters of the field, from behind heaps of dead and from beneath corpses, men were crawling like beasts. The field heaved, and at his gesture became alive.

For what did they hope, these ragged creatures apparently yet human, broken like dolls? It was impossible to tell. They merely rallied about a point of action: dully expectant, perhaps, of relief.

So, glancing up from time to time with pinched and

tranquil or with pain-convulsed faces they ambled toward the signaller; and he, shot through the mouth, waved uncertainly, with a slow, rhythmical motion the silent flag.

The sudden clanging of a solitary cracked bell broke out from the monastery.

All paused, looked up and regarded the building. A faint hope suggested itself in the brightening of their eyes. Voices in question addressed the upright soldier, who, however, with shaken head, mouthed in pantomime. His wound had made him dumb.

Thereon they turned to watching the road, and presently descried a group of persons advancing along it. The group resolved itself into a monkish procession. At its head walked a lean figure supporting vertically an immense black crucifix.

Behind him, amid an array of lighted candles, which flickered with an unreal and ghostly air in the hollow daylight, there was borne a heavy black coffin upon the shoulders of further sombre and monkish figures. All paced slowly forward; the candles flickered; the censers swayed, the cracked bell continued tolling. The bell ceased—a faint crying rose from the wounded, and from beneath the monkish cowls, pulled down over the faces, there were returned the words of the merciless and unending dirge:—

Dies irae, dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla.

Those that had collected about the man with the flag were now propped together, some with their arms about each other's necks, others supported against the knees of the standing.

With one accord all who were able stretched out their arms.

The being with the cross dipped it immediately, and at this, as with one motion, his followers pushed back their cowls, displaying bullet heads cropped after the German manner. The cross now dipped again, and the procession stopped dead. The cross dipped a third time, the lid of the coffin flew up with a metallic screech. There arose from within a figure in cerements, a tripod before him. Involuntarily the group of wounded shrunk backwards. But ere they could do aught, ere even they could throw themselves prone, the machine gun began its methodical comment: tat-tat-tatt! and again . . . tat-tat-tatt.

With never a sound the wounded trampled back upon each other, casting their arms across the sky, clutching their breasts, stumbling forward and sinking back until, save for the man who had held the flag, all lay in heaped confusion spilled upon the ground. But he, the survivor, staggering, essayed to run forward. With his hands he clasped his head. A terrible and inarticulate cry burst from his swollen mouth.

The maxim was heard again, but this time monosyllabically: tatt. Then, swaying like a giant awry, he too lurched back, fell forward, and tottered upon his face.

The lid closed with a click; the cowls fell over the faces; the procession moved onward and was swallowed in the bitter dusk.

The wind had dropped, and in the chilly gathering night, no sound rose over the whole plain but the crackling of the ice in the stray pools.

SOTHEBY'S.

MESSRS. SOTHEBY have issued for circulation among their friends a most charming little record of the famous firm's history, illustrated with delightful reproductions. Most old businesses have their romance, for the whirligig Time brings about romances as well as revenges. But no business in the past was more romantic than that of the booksellers—those traffickers in souls—who were once both traders, auctioneers and publishers. How many a great scholar slaked his unboyish thirst for learning at these fountains; how

many a renowned author besides Johnson drew thence his first draughts of inspiration. The booksellers of the eighteenth century were real educational centres, and men of varied distinction would meet in their dusty rooms to debate, or scintillate, or book-hunt, or read, or wrangle in the presence of the illustrious dead—a senate that none can closure. The auctions of the seventeenth century were vendors' trade auctions, and not the genuine dispersal of individual collections. The first recognised auctioneer of books appears to have been Samuel Baker, the founder in 1744 of the dynasty here celebrated, and the first Sotheby was his nephew. Earlier George Leigh had joined, and then came Sothebys galore, named after Leigh and Zallers, till finally Wilkinson and Hodge were added, and now we have Mr. Barlow, M.P., Mr. Hobson, F.S.A., and Captain Warre, M.C. The genial old founder, with his convivial eighteenth-century countenance, looks down from his historic frame with content on his prospering successors. The ancient Holywell Street—that Booksellers' Row haunted by Charles Lamb—has vanished, and now Sotheby's is no longer in the neighbouring Wellington Street, but, following the fashion, has been transferred to that Bond Street where in the remote past one of their firm once brought down his hammer. The original home of the firm was in York Street, Covent Garden.

It is pointed out that the high prices up to the early nineteenth century were paid for fine impressions of the classics, whereas now enormous sums are realised by all that is personal. The letters of the great Clarendon went for a song some century and a-half ago. The first autograph collection sold by Sotheby's—that of Mr. Thane, in 1819—only fetched £100, as against its probable value now of £5,000; and, whereas a single letter of Samuel Richardson realised £28 four years ago, seven of his letters only brought in a guinea between them. When Baker dispersed Fielding's library in 1764, books with his autograph notes were only worth a few shillings each, and yet in 1911—such enchantment has distance—£1,015 was paid for the novelist's agreement for the copyright of 'Tom Jones.' "Imagine the surprise of an eighteenth-century collector," writes Mr. Hobson in his interesting 'Notes,' "if he were told that more had been paid for a Non-conformist minister's narrative of an obscure guerilla war against North American savages than could be obtained for a splendid copy of the Florentine Homer . . . What would Dr. Johnson say could he learn that nearly as much had been given for an insignificant copy of doggerel verses by a modern Scotch novelist as for Wendelin's . . . noble Pliny, and nearly ten times as much for a quarto edition of a third-rate Elizabethan drama from which Shakespeare drew the characters and plot of one of his tragedies. Yet £230 was paid this year for R. L. Stevenson's verses to the Thompson Class Club, and £2,470 in 1914 for the Chronicle History of King Lear."

Of course, the greater purchasing power of money in those days must not be forgotten (and what would a sovereign invested at 3 per cent. compound interest in 1764 amount to now?) nor should we admit as a factor the immense increase in the wealth and number of collectors, and the great advance in knowledge and specialisation. But in the main it is the personal—often the sentimental—note that has triumphed.

Gradually Sotheby's became a mart of antiquities, coins and pictures, as well as of books, bookcases and manuscripts. Two of the illustrations will bring home the rarity of the treasures that have passed through these rooms. The one is Valentine Green's magnificent mezzotint of Sir Joshua's Duchess of Rutland—one of the young Sheridan's earliest flames. The price of it in 1913 was £1,350. The other is the superb Franz Hals, which was exchanged in the same year for £9,000, the highest sum ever paid to this firm for any single lot. It was catalogued—following the empty usage—as "Portrait of a Gentleman." It is clearly the likeness of a delightful bounder.

What changes and chances may yet be in store for this famous market! Whom and what will distance or nearness enhance for transformed posterity?

CORRESPONDENCE.

LORD LANSDOWNE'S LETTER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Outside the advocacy of certain measures of humaneness I have never participated in current politics, but Lord Lansdowne's letter makes me earnestly desire to say a word as an ordinary citizen, of whose three sons two are fighting and the third lying wounded in hospital. Lord Lansdowne says "that we do not desire the annihilation of Germany as a Great Power." Vehemently do I desire it, and so do tens of thousands in like case as myself.

If Germany is not annihilated as a Great Power by England and her Allies, England and her Allies will be ultimately be annihilated as Great Powers by Germany.

And what may be the claims of Germany upon us that she should be preserved as a Great Power?

She has spat on the ancient chivalries of battle; she has fleeced at the decent amenities of diplomacy; she has polluted with murder the splendid comradeship of the sea.

There is no infamy that her soldiers and sailors have not committed and that her people and their monarch have not acclaimed. Her sailors have sunk hospital ships at sea, her airmen have bombarded base hospitals on land, her soldiers have murdered priests and violated nuns.

When the "Lusitania" was sunk in the Atlantic and women and little children were left to struggle and drown in the trampling waves, the Kaiser decorated the author of the unspeakable act, and, amid the applause of his people, directed that a medal should be struck to commemorate the deed.

When the captain of a German submarine placed upon his deck the captured crew of an unarmed merchant vessel that he had sunk, destroyed their boats, took from them their lifebelts, carried them miles away from any floating wreckage, and then projected them into the sea to drown, the Kaiser decorated the ruffian for the atrocity, while all the people of Germany cried "Hoch!"

When gallant Fryatt, fulfilling every duty a captain owes to his inoffensive crew and helpless passengers, turned the bows of his unarmed packet-boat upon the infamous scoundrel in his abominable submarine, who sought to murder them in cold blood, he fell into the Germans' hands, and the cowards wrecked their vengeance on nobility that was beyond their comprehension and valour that rendered them insignificant.

Where is the sense of failing to annihilate a nation animated with the gelid malignity of the stoat and the calculated ferocity of the tiger?

We may not be able to effect this wholesome annihilation, but let us never abandon the attempt till we are ourselves ineluctably ruined and expunged.

STEPHEN COLERIDGE.

5, Buckingham Street, S.W.1,
December 4th, 1917.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE, AND OTHERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—When the SATURDAY REVIEW points out to us, as it does in the current issue, what it regards as a notable instance of the corruption of the Press by the Government, surely the blame for this should be placed upon the proper shoulders, and not be made a reproach to journalists and newspaper proprietors who have become prominent citizens entirely by reason of the great weight and influence which they have built up in the minds and judgment of the people.

Of what does the weight and influence consist, which these journalists and newspaper proprietors (almost entirely self-made men, by the way, and not inheritors of great wealth and estates, like the Marquis of Lansdowne) have succeeded in attaining amongst their fellow-men, if it is not the accurate portrayal and representation of the thoughts and aspirations of the people at large? No one is compelled to buy a copy of any of the Harmsworth publications, nor to spend money in advertising in them, but that so many do both every

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day of their lives is a living testimonial to the truth of what I have urged above. Delane, of the *Times*, boasted of his influence in the councils of his country. Many, no doubt, objected to him, but his force remained. Lord Northcliffe adds the *Daily Mail* to the *Times* among his spears of power, and, in addition, gives of his knowledge and experience to the service of the State in such spheres as he feels he can be most useful in. It appears to me that in this the common people, like the present writer, owe him our thanks.

Whether the journalist and newspaper proprietor will make good in the field of Government equally with the master of foxhounds, or the urban mill-owner or screw manufacturer, remains to be seen. When we have finished John Morley's recent ponderous work we hardly arrive at the conclusion that the first journalist in the Cabinet was exactly a success in politics, but it may well be that one swallow does not make a summer.

Many of your friends regretted that when you, Sir, were in Parliament the powers that be lacked the imagination to attach your activities more definitely to the State, although they feel that, in turning the House of Commons down, and in assuming the rôle of journalist and publicist, you have now chosen a career to which your eminent gifts and talents are peculiarly fitting.

France has, for many years, fully availed herself of the services of journalists, in and out of the Chamber. England and the United States are certain to follow her lead.—Your obedient servant,

J. LANDFEAR LUCAS.

101, Piccadilly, W., Dec. 3, 1917.

THE REVOLT OF THE ARABS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Your fearless attitude upon the subject of our Eastern policy makes me hope that you will give publicity to the following comments on an article which appeared in "The Times" of the 26th ult., "from an Arab correspondent." In it I read:

"There has always been foremost in the minds of the Turks a long-standing desire for the total extinction of the Arab race, and hatred and scorn of the Arabs."

In the interests of historical accuracy (at the risk of being thought old-fashioned) I must say that this is twaddle.

The Turks never had the slightest desire for the extinction of the Arab race. The Arabs of the Hejjâz, retaining their own tribal and feudal systems, were for the greater part of the period of Turkish suzerainty under a loose, and often merely nominal, not a despotic rule. The inconceivable brutality and ruthless cruelty (medieval methods of warfare) overtook them as reprisals for similar cruelties upon occasions when their lawlessness transgressed all bounds, and became a menace to the whole Islamic world which goes to Mecca. As for the taxes, they cannot have been so very exorbitant, since they were "levied upon rich and poor alike," and the difficulty of collecting them became proverbial. "The people" were always "more or less reckless and savage," and they robbed and murdered pilgrims in the period before the Turkish hegemony more ruthlessly than they were able to do afterwards, at any rate when the Turk's hand was strong in their country. As for "all the money of the Hejjâz" being "drained into the coffers of the Sultan of Turkey," the Sherif of Mecca was a wealthy man before the war, as wealth is counted in the Turkish Empire, and the position then secured to him and his forbears in the Hejjâz would have enabled them to benefit their country greatly had they wished to do so. They ranked as high Ottoman officials, and one can fancy that his present Highness must occasionally see in dreams his pleasant palace on the Bosphorus and the old comfortable days.

"The devotion of Moslems to their religion is well known," and from the second century of the Hejirah it has been the reproach of the Arabs of the Hejjâz and the Yemen that they placed their tribal jealousies and tribal pride before the interests of the Islamic realm. They lost their heads and ran amok upon some local grievance or affront without regard for Muslim in-

terests. For that reason they have been described by Muslim writers of the Arabic tradition as untrustworthy. It is the fashion for the moment to confuse the Arabs of Arabia and the desert with the vast Arabic-speaking populations outside Arabia, in whom the mixture of Arabian blood is very small, who acquired the Arab speech when they embraced Islâm. These (Muslims) were the people who produced the splendid civilisations of Cordova, Cairo, Baghdad, and Damascus. The noble followers of the Prophet became one with them, merging their nationality in their religion, as became true Muslims. The Arabs who remained behind in Arabia soon resumed their ancient habits, their tribal raids and jealousies. All the civilisations which arose to any height in the peninsula were the work of mixed Muslim populations in the plains and cities, protected by the Caliphate against the highland Arabs.

The Arab correspondent of the *Times* goes on to speak of the improvement which has taken place since the country was freed from the yoke of the Turks. We are told, among other things, that "the luggage of pilgrims is well looked after." I can well imagine that the Governments at present in alliance with his Highness the Sherif would stipulate for such reforms as that! Under the Turkish régime, we are told, there were only three primary schools in all the Hejjâz. Six others and one military school were opened a year ago. What will the Arab officers who for ten years and more have been educated free of charge in the military school at Constantinople, and now are fighting in the Turkish Army, think of that? "Three courses of religious instruction are given daily in the Haram, on the lines of that given at the El Azhar University in Cairo." Ma sha'llah! Religious instruction on the lines of Al Azhar was always easily to be obtained throughout the Muslim Empire. What was till lately unobtainable in the provinces was secular instruction on the lines of the Galata Serai lycée at Constantinople, and the Young Turk plan of a Medinah University was to provide that and a more enlightened teaching of religion. "The Public Works Department is rapidly widening the narrow streets of Mecca, and steps are also being taken to improve the Customs Service."

Now what I would impress upon your readers and, if I could, upon the British Government, is, that no one in the Muslim world outside Arabia cares a rap for all this, however favourably it may strike the English reader. It does not even touch the Arab "nationalist," who wishes to restore the ancient Muslim sway from India to the Atlantic, and hurl out the infidels, though if our present aim of cutting off the Arab provinces from Turkey is pursued, he will soon get his chance. As a Turcophil in spite of everything, I find myself regarded almost as a traitor to my country by some people at the present time. It is possibly because I care so much about the British Empire in the East, and from the circumstances of my life can see things from the Muslim point of view. Having had good reason to suspect as long ago as 1913 that the Entente Powers contemplated a partition of the Turkish Empire, and having seen the means by which the same suspicion, near to certainty, was forced upon the Turkish Government before this war, I realised the terrible effect which such a policy, executed at a moment when the Turks sincerely aimed at progress, would have upon my Oriental fellow-subjects. And in my small way I have been trying to make England realise it. Orientals, and Muslims in particular, judge politics on moral grounds, as history judges. They still regard national honour as more sacred than personal honour. I am amazed that the recent Russian revelations should have been allowed to be so widely published in our Press, for they show the Allies to have been quite conscienceless in their designs upon an Asiatic Empire, and will rouse the utmost horror in the East. I am amazed, too, that the one thing in our favour, from a Muslim point of view—our refusal (as asserted by Lord Robert Cecil) to remove the Caliphate at the behest of Russia, with the declaration that it was an affair for Muslims only to decide—should not have been proclaimed with flaring headlines. It ought to be made known at once throughout the Muslim East. Our

anti-Turkish plans were formed to please the Russian Government. Now that Russia has dropped out, we, by retaining them, step into her position as the foremost enemy of El Islâm. I wish a change could be announced immediately, for no one knows what course the war may take.

I am, Sir, Your obedient servant,

MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.

11, Bedford Place, W.C.1.

THE PLAIN MAN'S PUZZLES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The plain man, or "man in the street," is usually assumed to be without any intellectual subtlety, and so one, at least, has always been puzzled to think why, when such an enormous number of Mohammedans live contentedly as the King's subjects, in spite of German intrigues, and without apparently hankering after the Sultan, they should resent other Mohammedans being delivered from Turkish misrule, especially as there is no question of interfering with their religion.

F. H.

THE JEWS AND PALESTINE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Has your correspondent whose letter is signed "W. S. Hooton" read the 14th chapter of Zechariah, in which he will see that an appalling disaster awaits the Jews, should they return to their own land and form a nation without including their long-lost brethren of the Ten Tribes of the House of Israel?

There seems to be some confusion of thought with regard to the Return to the Holy Land. Your correspondent would seem to allude to the First Return of the Jews in unbelief, when they will occupy the land apportioned to the whole of the Twelve Tribes.

I do not wish to be understood to oppose the return of the Jews, as individuals, to their own land, where they have made, and will doubtless make, excellent colonists, but he would do the Jews an ill service who should advise their return as a nation, in defiance of the prophecy that this proceeding would call down Divine vengeance.

I have always been in favour of a British suzerainty in Palestine, and that the Holy Land should be free to all individuals of every race, including the Jews.

Yours faithfully,

DYSART.

Buckminster, Grantham,
December 4th.

THE CONSCRIPTION OF CAPITAL.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The discussion of this proposal is certain to attract the support of various dangerous bodies of opinion, the impulsive school of well-meaning sentimentalists, whose influence has weakened our national action since the outbreak of war and long before, the brigade of faddists and cranks, who think they see in the abnormal circumstances of the present a unique opportunity for getting their views put into practice, and the social and economic revolutionaries, whose great aim is to subvert existing institutions.

It is to be feared that there are many with whom appeals to equity and good faith would not have much effect unless they could be convinced that their individual interests would be prejudiced.

It is bad enough for the State to borrow a man's money at an agreed rate of interest, and later to scale the interest down at its own sweet will by an onerous income tax. Such a procedure will inevitably discourage investments from all outside the jurisdiction.

But for the State to issue its bond to a man for his money on loan and afterwards forcibly to seize his capital with which to repay him its own bond is to

treat that bond as a Prussian scrap of paper. Such a State would not be an acceptable borrower thereafter, either from its own citizens or from others.

Great Britain's position as a stable financial centre has been worth scores of millions to her annually. It is doubtful whether in any case she can ever regain fully her old pre-eminence in this regard, but there can be no possible doubt that methods such as are now being advocated would definitely transfer her long-established primacy abroad, where it has for many years been coveted.

I enclose my card, and am yours faithfully,

December 1, 1917.

BANK DIRECTOR.

THE ECONOMIC BOYCOTT OF GERMANY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Considerable anxiety is felt in financial and commercial circles as to the action, or rather inaction, of the Government with regard to the decisions of the Economic Conference at Paris in June, 1916. As will be remembered, a great many resolutions were there passed by the Entente representatives dealing with commercial policy during the war, the period of reconstruction immediately after the war, and the future. The gist of those resolutions was a denunciation of existing treaties containing most-favoured-nation clauses, in so far as they referred to belligerent enemies, the protection of the Entente Powers against dumping by Germany, and arrangements for reciprocal advantages and facilities of trade between the Entente Powers, and the development of their natural resources.

As far as is known, nothing definite has been done to render this programme effective. Certainly we have had no evidence of action so far as this country is concerned. Considering the active part taken by Chambers of Commerce in this country in promoting such a programme, it is little to be wondered at that anxiety and apprehension exist in commercial circles. Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot? A careful survey of public opinion on this side of the Atlantic affords no clue. Those, however, who have studied opinion, and especially commercial opinion, in the United States will probably have formed a shrewd guess as to the reason. The merchants of the United States, it appears, are averse to tying their hands now as to what they will do after the war is over. They are believers in the regeneration of Germany. They consider President Wilson's declaration, "No peace with the Hohenzollerns," as a magic formula before which the German nation will perforce bow, and the world will be made safe for democracy thereby. This regeneration is all in the womb of the future. It may, or it may not, happen. The chances appear to be against it. What appears to be certain is that commercial opinion in the United States, or at least an influential section of it, is basing its policy on a belief that the pressure of President Wilson's declaration will be effective, and acting accordingly. This is clear from a communication which has been made by Mr. Edward A. Filene to the *New York Times* of 23rd September last. Mr. Filene speaks with authority. He was a Vice-President and very active member of the International Congress of Chambers of Commerce which met in Boston in 1912. He is a director of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, a powerful body, with a wide-spread organisation throughout the Union, and he has made a constant study of war problems since the war began, twice visiting Europe specially with that object. He is also a prominent exponent of the policy of the United States League to enforce peace. Now let us see what Mr. Filene says. He declares that the American people will join in a boycott of German goods after the war "if the German Government does not become in fact a responsible instrument controlled by the German people." If it does so become, they will not. The American people, he tells us, will not boycott Germany on the ground of revengeful purpose, economic theory, or political motive. They will only so boycott Germany as a necessary measure for self-preservation. There must

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There are, however, two of these studies that must be excepted from this category, and in his treatment of them, Mr. Whibley has, in our opinion, rendered an important service to all who lay stress on historical truth. We refer to the chapters on Charles Fox and Lord Melbourne, in both of which he convincingly revises the commonly accepted impressions of those notable Whig leaders. To take Fox first: Thanks to Whig homage, and, in particular, to the picturesque partiality of Sir George Trevelyan, he has been reverentially exalted on the highest of pedestals, whereas, according to his deserts, he should be consigned to the pillory as, politically and socially, one of the most profligate characters of his age. To his father, the vulgar, venal *parvenu* who set opulence and a peerage above every other consideration, he was, it is true indebted for a disastrous bringing-up. To be spirited off to Paris at the age of fourteen in the middle of an Eton "half," and there incited to graduate in every species of vice is hardly an auspicious embarkation on the voyage of life. But even so ill-omened a *début* cannot be held to excuse a libertinism against which it was necessary to put even his young and beautiful aunt, Lady Sarah Lennox, on her guard; nor does it palliate the alacrity with which he lent his mistress to the Heir Apparent, whom it was, seemingly, his ambition to make as dissolute as himself. In money transactions he was no less unscrupulous, victimising his closest intimates in a fashion that commonly leads to an acquaintance with the dock. But this was not all. Although to plumb the depths of vicious degradation and cheat your own familiar friend are sufficiently discreditable achievements, they have been and will be forgiven to a statesman who holds a steadfast course, and has the welfare of his country truly at heart. But in these respects what was the record of Fox? He was one of the principals in a coalition pre-eminent in the annals of political turpitude, and when the existence of his country was at stake he exultantly acclaimed the triumph of her enemies. Yet to this hour he remains the cherished idol of Whig historians, while a famous Whig club toasts him annually as the party's greatest paragon since the glorious days of 1688!

When finding it difficult to extenuate Fox's delinquencies his admirers fall back on his fascination. He had, we are told, the sweetest of tempers, and read Homer with philosophical detachment while the bailiffs were carting away his chairs and tables. This line of advocacy recalls the retort of Sydney Smith to a tiresome individual who had been enlarging on the private virtues of Spencer Perceval, of whose statesmanship the Canon had expressed a poor opinion. "I am willing to admit," he said, "that Mr. Perceval is an exemplary gentleman, and attends Divine service at Hampstead every Sunday with Mrs. Perceval and the little Masters Perceval, but that does not prevent him from ruining his country."

Perhaps Fox's crowning feat as a proficient in shamelessness was his attitude to George III. on obtaining office in 1806. For years he had been assailing him with reproach and disparagement, yet on becoming once more his Minister he managed to convey to the King in abjectly servile terms the intimation that he should be rejoiced to meet any wishes that His Majesty might see fit to communicate!

This Charles Fox fetish is assuredly one of the most preposterous that ever flourished in the domain of politics, and we commend to the eclectic society that bears his name the concluding passage of Mr. Whibley's trenchant *exposé*: "As you look back upon a career which might have caused the destruction of England, you can smile at the hypocrisy which has converted Charles James Fox into a saviour of his country. His own contemporaries who loved him, in spite of his politics, knew him far too well to accept his opinions. The Radicals of to-day, with an imperfect knowledge of his qualities, worship him as one who hated England. How he would have laughed at the absurdity of this, his own image! And how unfortunate is the party, which, in spite of its active conscience, can find no better saints to reverence than John Wilkes and Charles James Fox!"

We now come to Lord Melbourne, of whom Mr. Whibley gives a true presentment with felicitous effect. This high-minded and many-gifted man is generally supposed to have been an elderly roué, addicted to oaths, who dallied with politics and aspired to marry Queen Victoria. His morality, it is true, was not very austere; as an inmate of Melbourne House in the reckless days of the Regency he could hardly be expected to emulate Romilly or rival Wilberforce. But if not over strait-laced, he was, as Mr. Whibley points out, chivalrously tender and forbearing to the woman whom Byron apostrophised in one of his brilliant couplets as false to her husband and fiend to himself. As regards his expletives, they were certainly on a lavish scale, "Big D's" in battalions being in constant readiness on the tip of his tongue. Of their exploits there is a plentiful record. For instance, he would greet the migration to a better world of a spiritual peer with: "D—n it, another Bishop dead!" When a scientific worthy interviewed him on the subject of Arctic exploration, he cut him short by d—ing the North Pole; while to a grievance-monger who complained that George Lamb, the Home Office Under-Secretary, had d—d both him and his business, Melbourne administered cold comfort with the reply: "Well, d—n it, what more could he do?" But such unparliamentary explosions were mostly accompanied by a genial smile, which deprived them of their sting. Mr. Whibley justly applauds Lord Melbourne's attitude as Queen Victoria's mentor. His relation to her is the most fascinating feature of the three important volumes of her "Letters," and constitutes an idyll of a description seldom identified with a throne. But at an earlier date and in widely different circumstances Melbourne had revealed qualities little suspected by those who only knew him in his favourite pose of political trifter. There are few more admirable letters in the correspondence of a statesman than those which he addressed to Brougham, after he had reluctantly decided not to readmit that erratic luminary into his counsels. As expressions of dignified yet gentle reproof they might have been written by a wisely affectionate father to a wayward son.

If not a brilliant figure in politics, Melbourne was eminently sensible and sagacious, valuable characteristics in the Whig Administrations of that day, which, though not untalented, were deplorably deficient in steadiness. He was, in fact, as Mr. Whibley shows, in the best sense of the term a Conservative, and, if Canning had lived, would certainly not have joined Lord Grey. After the fall of his Government in 1841 he never re-entered official life, and his later years were inexpressibly sad. Wifeless, childless, cut off from the young Sovereign to whom he was so touchingly devoted, and neglected by most of those whom he had befriended when in power, he brooded, broken and desolate, in monotonous seclusion, haunted by the consciousness of impending mental infirmity. Seldom has

a radiant and prosperous career been doomed to so tragical a close.

In the chapter entitled "The Corn Laws: A Group," the most interesting portrait is that of Lord George Bentinck, the resplendent dandy and racing magnate, who entered the House of Commons as a diversion, and at the dictates of duty, abjuring every cherished pursuit, became one of its most strenuous toilers. But while Mr. Whibley does ample justice to Bentinck, he is, we think, hardly fair to Peel. From a strictly party point of view by the course he took regarding the Corn Laws, Peel was undoubtedly open to reproach, and Sir Edward Knatchbull, whom Mr. Whibley invokes as a witness, presents a tolerably strong case. But a Minister's obligations to his country stand on higher ground than those to his party. Peel had convinced himself—erroneously some maintained—that famine was imminent, and, to prevent famine, he decided that the Corn Laws, his reliance on which had for some time past been weakening, must be repealed. In acting as he did he was influenced by no personal object. On the contrary, he knew only too well the obloquy that was in store for him from those who looked upon the Corn Laws as a justifiable lever of rents and a legitimate prop of prices, but to such considerations he was proudly indifferent. "His conduct appears to me," wrote that brilliant political essayist, Lord Dalling, "to have been dictated by the purest patriotism, and the most complete sacrifice of personal ambition to public motives"; and that judgment, based on an impartial review of the circumstances, ought, we submit, to prevail. Peel may have been mistaken in his policy—as matters then stood we venture to think that he was not—but that he was influenced by any but the highest motives it is impossible to doubt. Had it been otherwise, his death only a few years afterwards would hardly have elicited a tribute of national sorrow such as has been accorded to few English statesmen.

THE P.R.B. ONCE MORE.

Thomas Woolner, R.A.; His Life in Letters. By Amy Woolner. Chapman and Hall. 18s. net.

WOOLNER is the last of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to be commemorated in a book, yet he was by no means the least of them. Despite the current vulgar cant which decries everything Victorian, he deserves the general gratitude for having handed down the great men of his time—Tennyson and Browning, Palmerston and Sir Bartle Frere, and many more in no ignoble form. His statue of Lord Lawrence at Calcutta has poise and vigour, and the sculptor overcomes the frockcoat difficulty with much skill; if he fails with John Stuart Mill, also frockcoated, on the Embankment—well, ought not a statue of John Stuart Mill to be futile? Woolner's ideal productions, it must be admitted, sometimes come dangerously near the soap advertisement, while his studies of children will be pronounced hopelessly finical by that school which hurls a half-raw piece of bronze or marble at the public's head, and shouts, "That's my idea of 'A Chorus Lady' or 'Higher Mathematics,' and be hanged to you!" Still, as his friend Browning would have said, "completion sped" when Woolner was at work, and he was, of course, Pre-Raphaelite down to the tips of his stone-babies' dear little toes. Pre-Raphaelite, too, was his poetry, which, though it falls far short of Rossetti's, sounds a wrenlike note of its own, and deserves at least the resurrection of anthologies more frequently than it gets that tardy reward.

As his daughter has evidently perceived, Woolner's social importance lay rather in his friends than in himself. A phrase, written during a luckless expedition to the Australian goldfields, defines him as a young man: "A bath and a pipe are the only luxuries I can indulge in: one is healthy, the other injurious." Woolner seems to have altered little from first to last; he was a worthy specimen of the Briton, devoted to those about him, and never jealous of his rivals' successes. He worked hard all his life, often under disappointment, and when means came to him at last it

pleased him to turn collector and, in a modest way, art patron. He believed in Mulready, and bought his pictures; one of these days the dealers will make a "corner" in Mulready, and the art world will, or ought to, praise Woolner's discernment. He also tried country life, and made, as we can imagine, beautiful houses and gardens; but his daughter hints that farm bailiffs troubled the rural peace, as they have a way of doing, when artists and sculptors go back to the land. Woolner, however, as has been said, subordinated himself to his circle, and, when detraction has said its worst about the P.R.B., a notable circle it was. It is a pleasure to keep company once more with Rossetti, W. B. Scott, Holman Hunt, Ford Madox Brown, and the rest of them—for, if they believed in themselves, they believed passionately in one another. And their sympathies ranged far afield, touching Tennyson, through his illustrations, the Brownings, Darwin, Sir Joseph Hooker; in fact, nearly everyone of repute, including Gladstone, then erroneously regarded as a fine classical scholar. Rossetti's letters are delightful; the radiant Rossetti of Chatham Place, Blackfriars, not the recluse of Chelsea, laughing with joy over the triumphs of various "stunners" of the P.R.B., but mourning, too, with manly grief when Walter Deverell, a member of the group, was taken away. "His was the happiest face when our circle sat together, and it is the first gone that may not return." The P.R.B. stood foursquare to the world, and when Ruskin chastised "The Scapegoat," not without cause, Woolner became indignant, and declared that a poor man on the right road ought to be given the benefit of the doubt. Thenceforth Ruskin was a "conceited creature" to the faithful, who, though he professed to hate sculpture, "went into a buzz of inflated rapture" over Marochetti's "Victory," and thought that Richmond, the portrait painter, would be the best selection for Shakespeare's statue at Melbourne. The P.R.B. were healthy haters.

Rossetti, unfortunately, fades out of the correspondence rather early; we hear but little about him after 1857. His place is taken by those two admirable ladies, Mrs. Carlyle and Mrs. Tennyson. Of Jane Welsh there is little to say, except that her letters are in her most sprightly manner, and that, without accepting the full Froudian melodrama, we certainly gather that the sage, absorbed in his 'Frederick,' did pay insufficient attention to his wife's ailments during the winters in Cheyne Row. But Mrs. Tennyson is a revelation—so excellent is her judgment and so wide her outlook on the world. She conducted a copious correspondence with Woolner, about the events of the day, the sayings of their common friends, presents to the children and creature comforts, including a wild boar's ham. Alfred, she thought, wanted something to do. So Woolner wrote out "The Fisherman's Story," which he had read on his voyage home from Australia, and Tennyson converted it into "Enoch Arden." He wrote out another story about a sermon, and the bard aggrandised his somewhat prosy prose into 'Aylmer's Field.' One criticism of Mrs. Tennyson's will perplex the present generation: "I wish the public could compel A. by Act of Parliament to cut off his beard!" Now, Woolner's beardless medallion and bust of Tennyson are reproduced in this volume. They are Emersonian and New England, and the public would no more have tolerated an alteration of "make up" than they would have put up with Lord Derby unspectacled, or Disraeli minus the goatee. Otherwise, the bard's surroundings undoubtedly treated him to too much hero-worship. There was no one to tell him, certainly not Woolner, that his Arthur was a prig and a bore; that the world could have done with more "Ulysses" and less "Maud." In the same way the Victorian writers generally were perpetually lading out mutual admiration, in season and out of season. It is a relief to come across, among so much mere sugar, an outspoken opinion like this of Coventry Patmore's on Browning, who had just died:—

"B was a man of various and remarkable ability. But two things are essential to Poetry. It must be interiorly worthy and externally beautiful. Without a beautiful exterior, however worthy the interior, it is not poetry any more than a dish of

stewed apples is a pie. . . . Herrick is a far better poet than Browning, though intellectually an insect in comparison."

A DANTE SCHOLAR.

Recollections of Seventy-two Years. By the Hon. William Warren Vernon. Murray. 12s. net.

MR. VERNON is to be congratulated on his retentive memory. An elderly gentleman who can recall Mrs. Keeley as Nicholas Nickleby, who has conversed with Voltaire's gardener, and seen Jerome Bonaparte in the flesh, must entertain many varied and interesting thoughts as he sits by his fireside. It does not follow, unfortunately, that the conversation of the family circle or the records of a copious diary will bear translation into brutal print. Mr. Vernon has overlaid his narrative with trivial remarks and unimportant details. We get far too much of this sort of thing:—"Other friends [at Eton] were Charlie Fremantle (Hon. Sir Charles, K.C.B.), Charles Townsend Murdoch (late M.P. for Reading), and Algernon Bertie Mitford (afterwards Lord Redesdale)." When Mr. Vernon visits an Italian town, he thinks it necessary to record not only the name of his hotel but the look of the rooms as well. His book, in short, resembles not a little the ox-tail soup purveyed by inferior restaurants, and composed of a shred or two of meat swimming in a large quantity of insipid fluid.

As an erudite Dante scholar, and the son of the producer of the elaborate Vernon Dante, Mr. Vernon has met many learned Italians, including Cardinal Mezzofanti, Byron's "walking polyglot," and that truly cultivated man, Sir James Lacaita. Guizot, with whom he was distantly connected, told him that he had spent his time, when in hiding after the Revolution of 1848, in reading a French translation of the Waverley Novels from beginning to end. Though his travels seem to have followed familiar itineraries for the most part, he had an odd experience as a boy when he was admitted to the harem of Rifat Pasha. Salmon fishing in Norway, the beginnings of the Charity Organisation Society, and country life at Wolseley also figure in a book which admittedly escapes monotony so far as its subject-matter goes; and Mr. Vernon's readers will rub shoulders with queer folk like Rarey, the horse-tamer, Rush, the murderer, and "Father Ignatius" as a curate in the Church of England. But they will feel that this artless record needs drastic condensation.

CANADIAN.

A Canadian Subaltern: Billy's Letters to His Mother. Constable. 2s. net.

From England in training and from the front in Flanders "Billy," a Canadian officer, writes these letters to his mother. They are the frank outpourings of an observant soldier, who sees a good deal and has a genuine feeling for Old England, a land rich in historical beauty and the novelties of barmaids and ruined castles. "Billy" is a good specimen of the vigorous, independent, and thoughtful soldiers of Canada. He is evidently devoted to his home and his new military work, and capable of deep and serious feeling; but he conceals this, as a rule, in an extraordinary lingo, which reminds us in turn of Mark Twain, O. Henry, and the facetious paraphrases of music-hall comedians. Tommy "has a gnawing in his eight-cylinder, self-starting, 1916 model stomach." When spring comes on and the sun comes out, it is an ardent affair between Old Sol and Mother Earth:

"None of your brotherly pecks or kisses, but long, warm Elinor Glynny ones, so that she is all dolled up in her spring sartorial effect." Those who regret the loss of gender in English may note that several things are called "she," including a blister, a barometer, a wind, and a motor-bus.

Concerning several locutions we are not at all certain, but we note that the writer has gifts for description, apart from his slang. The present critic always figured he was no simp in that line, but he wants a close season to catch up with the curiosities already on hand. It sure beats all how easy one is fogged with a word that may be jake and worth boosting. A little coaching in this language will soon be worth a "dilly box of eats."

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

The Book of the Happy Warrior. By Henry Newbolt. With 8 coloured plates and 25 other illustrations, by Henry J. Ford. Longmans. 6s. net.

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT has already gained the plaudits of many a boy at Christmas time, and we expect to see his 'Book of the Happy Warrior' among the "best sellers" of the season, a result which, for once, should please everybody. The author has long won a place among the select few who have worthily commemorated national valour. He has a fine sense of the chivalries of the past as well as the present. He spares no pains with his excellent prose; he shuns alike the modern preciousness which spoils the old stories and the slipshod sentimentality which distorts virtue, a word which in older days meant the essential qualities of manhood—these qualities which go to form "the happy warrior." The title of the book in itself is a specimen of his felicitous taste. From 'The Song of Roland' to 'The Chevalier Bayard,' with 'Robin Hood' and 'News from Poitiers' by the way, we pass through a fine pageant of valorous doings, none the worse, perhaps, because some of these "great and chivalrous gentlemen were downright scallywags in their boyhood." The preface is a little beyond the average boy, who cares nothing about the sources used or the labours of an author, but we hope it will not be missed, as it has some simple and effective words concerning what chivalry was and is. We are the more grateful to Sir Henry for his work because we miss, as the years go by, the deft and kindly pen of Andrew Lang at this season. The accomplished men of letters who write for our young people are too few. We want the sense of perspective which comes from the trained mind and which goes with the trained pen. The many original fairy stories attempted only serve to reveal more clearly the rarity of good results in this difficult line, where the despised Victorians easily surpass their possibly cleverer successors. The old stories are the best stories, and anyone who can handle them with the skill of Sir Henry Newbolt need fear no modern competitors. At the end of his book he has added some direct comments on 'The Old English School' and 'Chivalry of To-day,' beginning with the epigram ascribed to a German concerning the English, "You will always be fools, and we shall never be gentlemen." What is a gentleman? That question is answered out of Chaucer, and the importance of tradition is maintained. The English type of gentleman at its best remains true to itself by inheritance. But in these days the influence or inheritance of the past is commonly scouted as worthless, and that part of chivalry which is revealed in courtesy and self-restraint is being rapidly forgotten. The rising democracy has need to learn the lessons of this book. It does not believe in the nobility of service; it is self-sufficient and self-advertising; and, looking at its betters, does not seek to emulate their example. It vociferates:—

"They call that man as good as me!"

The Boy Scout movement, as the author points out, has done much, but public opinion—a sounder view of the gentleman and his essential qualities—can do more.

We like Mr. Ford's plain and small illustrations better than his full-page colour schemes, for the latter reveal a tiring insistence on red. Cloaks, the coverings of tents, and all the insignia of chivalry bore us with incessant scarlet, as the Cardinals did in Tree's setting of 'Henry VIII.'

ROMANCE AND FAIRY TALE.

The Romance of King Arthur. Abridged by Alfred W. Pollard. Illustrated by Arthur Rackham. Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

Legends and Romances of Brittany. By Lewis Spence. Illustrated by W. Otway Cannell. Harrap. 10s. 6d.

Serbian Fairy Tales. Translated from the Serbian by Madame Elodie L. Mijatovich. Illustrated by Sidney Stanley. Heinemann. 6s.

Twenty-two Goblins. Translated from the Sanskrit by Arthur W. Ryder. Illustrated by Perham W. Nahl. Dent. 7s. 6d.

A VERY seasonably served up abridgment of Sir Thomas Malory's 'Morte D'Arthur' is introduced by a preface in which the adapter makes such a skilful analysis of the characters of Malory's knights and heroes that one follows the book with twice the interest one would have taken in these personalities of chivalry, had they been less ably dissected. Mr. Pollard has seen into the human souls that were hidden by the panoply of armour and cloth-of-gold, much the same souls that underlie ill-cut khaki in this stressful year of 1917. In attempting the abridgment Mr. Pollard has not used more than a hundred words of his own, he has left us the great book "written in a style in which homely charm and nobility are so closely interlinked, that to tamper with it may seem a crime." "I have tried to clear away some of the underwoods, that the great trees may be better seen, and though I know I have cleared away some small timber that is fine stuff in itself, if the great trees stand out the better, the experiment may be forgiven." And the experiment has succeeded. At the same time Sir Thomas Malory himself would be hard to please were he dissatisfied with the fashion in which Arthur Rackham has chosen to limn his lords and ladies. The illustrator's occasionally troublesome wealth of detail is here artistically consistent with the text, though we confess we prefer the black and white drawings and illuminated chapter-headings to the carefully protected coloured plates.

In contrast to the above publication stand the 'Legends and Romances.' This is an attempt to collect into one volume the most striking folk-tales and popular ballads connected with the ancient landmarks of Brittany. It starts with a short description of the geological features of the country, together with a synopsis of its earlier history, and ends with some interesting information about the ancient rites and dress still extant in some of the more remote parts of the province. The author has chosen to put the stories into his own words, and as many of the legends are the same that one meets in the 'Morte D'Arthur,' he has merely succeeded in showing how much these tales owe to Malory's "homely charm and nobility of style." When robbed of their ancient form and dressed in modern language they become tiresome records of senseless savagery and violence. The author's habit of dropping into poetry is to be deplored. Though he has some feeling for the "ballad" style, these rhymed "free translations," as he calls them, add little to the value of the work as a whole. It is perhaps a little drastic to call the volume a glorified guide-book. However, published in a pocketable size and shorn of its rather mediocre illustrations it would make an excellent companion to a walking tour among the "menhirs" and "dolmens" of Carnac, or in the Forest of Broceliande. For this purpose it should be supplied with a map of modern Brittany, and there is no reason why it should not be published at 3s. 6d. instead of 10s. 6d.

Each story of the 'Serbian Fairy Tales' leaves one with a sense of having read something very like this many times before. But then is a mere "grown up" ever a good critic for a child's book? To estimate its true value one should give it to an intelligent youngster of eight or ten years, and cite his or her opinion with full confidence. These tales may be of the right stuff to invoke the glamour of the childish imagination, but to the adult reader they seem bald enough. It is interesting to note a Serbian version of "Cinderella" called "Papallugia," in which the heroine's mother, transformed into a cow, takes the place of the fairy god-mother of Western European tradition.

These Indian fairy tales, which claim to be translated direct from the Sanskrit, are told somewhat in the "Arabian Nights" manner. King Triple-victory has pledged his word to bring to a certain monk a dead body hanging on a "sissoo-tree" some distance south of the palace. On arriving at the "sissoo-tree" he finds that the body, in accordance with the popular and typical Hindu superstition, has become the abode of a goblin. Nothing daunted, the king places the fearsome

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object on his shoulder in order to carry it to the waiting monk. As he is being borne along, the wily goblin suggests that "to amuse the journey" he shall tell the king a story "with a puzzle in it." The king agrees, but each time he solves the puzzle the body slips from his shoulder and hangs itself afresh upon the "sissoo-tree," obliging the king to retrace his steps and start upon his journey to the monk all over again. This happens twenty-one times, but on the twenty-second occasion the goblin, pleased with the king's steadfast character, leaves the body, thus allowing the king to bring it to the monk, who makes him King of the Fairies as a reward for his zeal.

Whether any matter has been expurgated from these tales we are not told, but, judging from the text and general tone of what is put before us here, also from some previous experience of Hindu legends in their native form, we should conclude that some little Bowdlerisation has been necessary. The poet, for the translator of such a work must be something of a poet, shows himself very sensitive to the mixture of naïve simplicity and Oriental floweriness which constitute their style. In places he renders the striking imagery of the original with singular success; a typical example is the exquisite passage where the bruised hands of "King Virtue-banner's" delicate queen "were like two lilies with black bees clinging to them."

It is characteristic of the Hindu temperament that in these tales the hero's success is nearly always achieved by means of supernatural intervention. He seldom attains his object through the strength of his own individual effort, as in the more virile European legends, notably the Arthurian ones, where enchantment and witchcraft seldom lead to anything but evil. Nor does the Asiatic hero ever conquer his enemies with the help of grateful creatures or animals, rescued from disaster in the course of his previous travels and adventures, as in the Serbian fairy tales. He attains the highest virtue and heroism possible to mankind by slaughtering himself as an offering to his god, a sacrifice which is pretty safe for him to indulge in, as he is always miraculously restored to life by the grateful deity. One would be loth to entrust this book to the ten-year-old critic. Its whole tone renders it of more value to the middle-aged folklorist than to the young.

THE WAR.

The Wipers Times. Jenkins. 6s. net.

Nothing will ever prevent the Englishman from having his little joke, even if his audience is somewhat restricted, and the spirit which prompted the publishing of a newspaper amidst Arctic ice was the same as that which produced the 'Wipers Times' from the ruins of a printing office at Ypres. The paper seems to have had as many names as if it had been edited by M. Clemenceau, and as continuous a policy—that of seeing the fun in everything, not forgetting the military criticism of such experts as Teech Bomas and Major Taude, B.C. There is a serial by Ruby N. Pares, 'From Bugler to Boy Brigadier,' almost as good as its prototype. The verse is funny, and the irreverent reverence paid to the subordinate members of the higher command is inimitable. Few of us have the opportunity of possessing originals of any of the trench journals, so that this facsimile will be welcome to many as a permanent record of the gaiety of the soldier.

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but, if the business is to be done for young people, Capt. Brereton is certainly well qualified to do it. He is an old hand at boys' books, and as soon as he gets his hero enlisted as the result of an affray at home, he takes him into many tight corners and risky "scraps." Roger Norman, among his first experiences in the infantry, finds the lair of a destructive sniper—a well-told incident—and returns home wounded. Thereafter he is in command of a tank, is captured, and has a thrilling time as a prisoner freed from close quarters in a railway truck by a bomb from a British aeroplane. Throughout he is accompanied by a "fidus Achates" who joins up at the same time, and he meets at the front, by an odd coincidence, two enemies of his earlier days. Capt. Brereton interrupts his narrative occasionally for the insertion of a little solid history of the British advances and the German hopes.

The Old Country: A Book of the Love and Praise of England. Edited by Ernest Rhys. Dent. 3s. 6d. net.

This book has been published for the Y.M.C.A. by Messrs. Dent, and edited at their request by Mr. Ernest Rhys. Sir Arthur Yapp leads off with an article 'At the Sign of the Red Triangle,' which precedes the editor's preface note. The book is of a handy size and designed for "a kit-book or hut-book." It has some of the pretty illustrations we associate with the firm of Dent, and a variety of contributions which should please all tastes. Elizabethan Camden's praise of Britain comes next to Mr. Kipling's posy of 'The Flowers' of our far-flung empire. De Quincey's 'Old English Mail Coach' thunders down to victory between Mr. Hardy's 'Song of the Soldiers' Wives' and Browning's 'Home Thoughts from Abroad.' General Smuts and Wordsworth share a page between them. Mr. Rhys has allowed himself a wide view of his sub-title, including, for instance, Mr. G. K. Chesterton's ingenious special pleading for detective stories, and some 'Old English Weather Lore' from 'Notes and Queries.' We do not think that all the living writers included deserve their places by the side of their elders and betters, but other people may differ on the point. We cannot, for instance, imagine any true lover of his country who had a page at his disposal preferring the Prime Minister's paragraph on Caerphilly Castle to Matthew Arnold's exquisite and immortal praise of the English spring and summer in 'Thyrsis.' Great names do not necessarily mean great literature, or any eminence in the realm of the Muses. Yet we should not grumble, since Mr. Rhys has given his readers a good choice of the masters of letters. We expected no less from his knowledge and enthusiasm. After reading through the book, we have wished to return to one or two pieces, but there is no index to help us. The illustrations cover much of the best of English scenery and architecture.

RHYMES.

More Nursery Rhymes of London Town. By Eleanor Farjeon. Illustrated by Macdonald Gill. Duckworth. 3s. net.

Several of these verses have appeared in 'Punch,' and the author's style of writing is by this time well known. She has a naïve and quaint vein of her own which at the best is decidedly effective. We do not see much in—

"Kew is for Flowers, Red, Yellow and Blue;

When the Flowers are in Bloom, you and I are for Kew." That is the sort of couplet so easily made that it hardly seems worth printing. The author's ingenuity and picturesqueness are, however, not fairly exhibited by this specimen. She plays prettily with the names of places, and she has, too, a happy boldness in recapturing the simplicity of young romance. We like the white blackbird which sang "On the high road to Richmond," and we can forgive the author a few trivialities and failures for the sake of the freshness and humour of her verses. They are well supported by the illustrator.

The Rhyme Garden. Written and illustrated by Marguerite Buller Allan. Lane. 3s. 6d. net.

The author has provided a positive orgy of bright colours in her pictures, which do not seem to us near enough to nature to appeal to children. It looks as if she had sacrificed the idea of the picture to producing a pattern, being influenced, perhaps, by the wonders of the post-impressionists. Such things the nursery is apt to reject as merely ugly, or hopelessly fantastic. Whoever saw a scarecrow fitted with elegant blue trousers, dancing pumps, and a red-and-blue coat? We suppose the author would plead, as she does in her verse, that—

"Colour is a voice that sings

In these gay and lovely things!"

We prefer her verses to her pictures, because the former are more easy and natural. Writing, now in the style of verse in which Mr. Belloc has proved his mastery, and now in the vein of Stevenson's child poems, she has some

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successes and some failures. This kind of verse must run easily and seem to be almost an impromptu. The labour of the file that is behind it must be invisible. Weak or forced expressions, or a wrong emphasis, spoil the effect. 'The Child's Prayer,' one of the most difficult things to do, is one of the best done here. The end paper is quaint with its repetitions of a white elephant. It shows what can be achieved without a gaudy show of colour.

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Few people have the talents requisite for writing their own libretto, as Wagner did, or making their own verses and adorning them with pictures. Miss Harrison's pictures are dainty and she has a good sense of colour and design. Her verses are tolerable, but hardly distinguished. They are, however, shown off to advantage by the black and white sketches which surround them. The 'Troll Bowl' is the best of the four pieces of fanciful verse. The author has evidently a real appreciation of the grace and beauty of childhood, and her book has been excellently produced by the publishers.

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A School Camp-Fire. By Elsie Jeanette Oxenham. Chambers. 4s. net.

The camp-fire of the story refers to Indian ceremonies, rites, honours, and rewards which are introduced to a girls' school by some new American pupils. Before these and other details of school life we are introduced to an attractive girl who lives on a Yorkshire moor and gets a schooling in the delights of Nature which does not come to many girls. A third main interest is a case of conscience in which a girl is barred because she is accounted a "rotter" and cannot explain. The book is pleasant, particularly in its details of open-air life. The author evidently knows and enjoys the countryside and the world of flowers. But we think it a little pedantic to talk about "antirrhinum" and "delphinium." What is the matter with the good old English words "snapdragon" and "larkspur"?

The Gold-Marked Charm: The Story of a Mystery of the Blue Nile Country. By Bessie Marchant. Blackie. 5s. net.

Of the many books for girls the author has written this is one of the brightest, being set in a region where Arabs plunder and disappear, where the slave trade still goes on, and where the slow-moving caravan makes communication between the strongholds of the desert a difficult affair. The heroine is an English girl, though her mother was the daughter of a native chief, and when we add that her father is rich and idle, except where materials for his great book on the Soudan are concerned, and leaves his daughter mainly to her own devices, the materials for romance are clear. The nomads of the Upper Nile figure excitingly in the story, and but for the charm of the title would be too much for the adventurous heroine. The long arm of coincidence is rather hard worked, but that does not matter for young readers, who will find much that is novel to enjoy in the adventurous life of the East.

The Madcap of the School. By Angela Brazil. Blackie. 3s. 6d. net.

A large, grey, old Tudor house was the school into which the irrepressible heroine of this story and her companions moved after the Easter holidays. But there was nothing ancient in the way of English about their language. On the first page one of the girls says "Jubilate! You're right, old sport! Scooterons-nous this very sec!"

We do not like this sort of lingo at all, and do not believe it yet to be characteristic of the best girls' schools. There is abundance of excitement and entertainment in the story, which would surely suffice without the up-to-date smartness of abbreviations, babyisms, and a perpetual dose of slang. But a school which includes the capture of a German spy, the marooning of two girls on an island, and a secret doorway which leads to a mystery, is not meant, perhaps, to be very real. The author writes brightly and introduces war incidents.

ROMANCE AND ADVENTURE.

Christmas Tales of Flanders. Illustrated by Jean de Bosschere. Heinemann. 12s. 6d. net.

This handsome and well-illustrated book is one of the most attractive we have seen this season. It gives us renderings of the popular fables and legends current in Flanders and Brabant which have a colour and quaintness of their own, yet retain the attractive simplicity of all folk-tales. Beginnings like "On a cold winter's night, thousands of years ago, St. Peter took one of his occasional walks on earth,"

and "One day a parrot belonging to the Emperor Charlemagne escaped from its cage and could nowhere be found," prepare us for the best sort of fairy tale which combines adventure with an unobtrusive and so more effective moral. The world of Flanders fable is, in fact, very like that of Grimm and Hans Andersen. Wizards, imps, countesses, and turkeys, with other fantastic talking animals, make a capital Christmas mixture. The quaint side of the stories has been aptly emphasised by the artist, whose coloured pictures have the opulent glow of the 'Arabian Nights.' "The Procession" in 'The Little Blacksmith Verholen' might have been inspired by study of a mediæval artist. The black-and-white sketches in the text are all effective. We like the Devil making himself as tall as a tower, the wolf with a paw broken, and the dumpy child who was carried away by the mermaid. The exchanges at the market of Simple John, a buyer as easily persuaded as the Vicar of Wakefield's son, are neatly exhibited in a few tints. Some of the drawings seem to us a little scratchy, but they will all be clear to a child. They lack the tortured straining after originality and the purposeful ugliness which modern art has occasionally thrust upon the nursery—to its dismay, as we can testify.

Wonder Book: A Picture Annual for Boys and Girls. Edited by Harry Golding. Ward Lock. 3s. 6d. net.

The 'Wonder Book' on its cover supplies us with the chocolate-box sentiment of Mr. A. J. Elsey, of which there is still a plethora in these days. We prefer the other artists inside the book. Mr. G. E. Shephard makes a good combination with Miss Jessie Pope, whose verses are always bright and gay. Eugene Field's "Rock-a-by Lady" we are glad to see again. The stories are successful in avoiding the long, dull words which mean nothing to a child, and the whole is in good, clear type—an important point.

Æsop's Fables. With 100 illustrations by F. Oppen. Lippincott. 6s. net. Mother Goose. With 250 pictures by F. Oppen. Same publisher.

The publishers tell us that, if Æsop's talking animals could come to life and examine this twentieth century edition of the fables in which they figure, they would doff their hats to Mr. Oppen in enjoyment of "the humour, the fun, and the spirit of us all." We venture to doubt it, and we are further told that this is the edition for adults as well as the young. Has the artist really improved one of the world's great books? That depends on the view one takes of the irreverent American humour and of the various new locutions to which it introduces us. A 'Strong Hunch' and 'chesty' are not pleasing to us, and some of the "morals" attached to the fables are more smart than intelligible. What child could understand the query: "Did someone shout Nature Faker?" "A cracker is a meal—if it's all there is in the house" is nonsense in this country, where crackers are a feature of Christmas, but are certainly not eaten. What is a "bonehead"? We are relieved when we come across some plain English. In some of the morals the modern translator certainly goes beyond Æsop's intentions, inculcating sentiments which, however laudable, are by no means universally accepted. Æsop has won his way everywhere because his matter is for all. This twentieth century edition localises it.

The illustrations, both here and in 'Mother Goose,' a collection of the old nursery rhymes and jingles, are in the extravagant style of caricature. They smarten up things considerably, which may, or may not, be desirable, as the reader pleases. For instance, the rhyme which begins—

"When I was a little boy I had but little wit:

It is some time ago, and I've no more yet,"

is illustrated by a picture of a man in ill-fitting clothes with an immense nose, a small hat on the back of his head, and two placards on his back, "April Fool" and "Please Kick Me Hard." Two ragamuffins, presumably responsible for these additions, smile behind their victim. There are, however, some simpler pictures of an effective sort, and we like the fantastic picture of the enormous shoe which held so many children. The figures and the humour throughout we recognise as distinctly American.

Everyday, with Which is Incorporated Sunday. Vol. XLV. Wells Gardner. 3s. 6d. net.

This volume is certainly cheap, in view of its abundance of illustrations and the variety of its matter. We are glad to see besides puzzles and stories of adventure articles concerning science and mechanics, and the life of earlier days. "How the World Travels" is a capital serial, instructive without being boring. We should prefer to see some good old poetry occasionally, instead of the modern verses included, which are facile enough, but hardly distinguished. Taste in poetry cannot be formed too early, and we believe that children like the real thing. As it is, they are in danger of being overdone with sentimentality.

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be no economic league against a "democratised Germany of sane ambitions." American business, however, be it understood, will never again, he says, fill the war chest of an uncontrolled military clique in an autocratic Germany. This theme Mr. Filene expands and amplifies, and he quotes President Wilson in support of his position when he said in his reply to the Pope's letter: "Punitive damages, the dismemberment of empires, the establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues we deem inexpedient, and in the end worse than futile, no proper basis for a peace of any kind, least of all for an enduring peace." Have we not here the germ or basis of the alleged supineness of our Government complained of by commercial men? Is it not that the Government has come to see that "punitive damages," which are of the very essence and core of the proposals of the Paris Economic Conference, can never be exacted in the event of the United States refusing to concur? In all such matters the United States must undoubtedly be seriously reckoned with. No measures such as those under discussion can be effective if opposed by her. What, then, is our position? Are the Paris proposals alive or dead? Commercial men who are in favour of them are entitled to ask and to have an answer.—I am, etc.,

F. FAITHFULL BEGG.

London Chamber of Commerce,
Cannon Street, E.C.

SENECA AND SUICIDE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The ethics of suicide is an interesting, if somewhat morbid, subject. The Stoics maintained that a man's life was his own, and that if he deliberately came to the conclusion that it was not worth living, there was an unanswerable reason for terminating it. One of my favourite sentences from Seneca—it has nothing to do with suicide—is the following: "*Circumspiciendum ergo nobis est quomodo a vulgo tuti esse possimus*—We should therefore look about us, and see how we may protect ourselves from the mob." Capital! but how is it to be done? "*Quam minimum sit in corpore tuo spoliolum*—Let there be as little booty as possible on your person." But if creeping about in shabby clothes with sixpences in one's pocket be not sufficient to protect oneself from the mob, or the mob's Chancellor of the Exchequer, or Nero—as the case may be—the Stoic seriously asks himself, is this good enough? "*Quousque eadem?*—How long must I endure the same things?" But even then there is to be no undignified hurry about it, no jumping off Westminster Bridge in the small hours; no razor business; it must be calmly done. "*Etiam cum ratio suadet finire se, non temere nec cum procurso capientis est impetus. Vir fortis ac sapiens non fugere debet vitam, sed exire*—The brave and wise man should not beat a hasty retreat from life: he should make a becoming exit." Seneca, looking all round upon the conditions of life under Nero, came to the conclusion that if he must die it would be better to die at his own time and in his own manner than at Nero's time and in Nero's manner. So the philosopher ensconced himself in a warm bath and opened a vein.

Plato makes Socrates repudiate this philosophy, in the famous figure of the sentinel deserting his post, which passed through the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists into Christian theology. But it must be remembered that Platonists, Epicureans and Stoics were sects or parties, like Unionists, Radicals and Nationalists; and that what a Stoic asserted was bound to be contradicted by a Platonist. Which view of suicide will prevail in the future—the Stoic or the Platonist? I am told that juries are increasingly unwilling to return the conventional verdict, "suicide while of unsound mind." Of course, they will go on returning it so long as suicide is regarded as a crime.

It is curious how waves of suicide pass over a nation at intervals, generally, it must be admitted, in periods of national depression. The five years that followed

Waterloo were a period of universal distress. The long war was over, peace had brought anything but the Millennium: and the inevitable reaction set in. Suicides became prevalent. Between 1815 and 1821 three leading British statesmen committed suicide—viz., Castlereagh, Whitbread, and Romilly. Lord Castlereagh was said to be blackmailed: Whitbread was worried about his losses over Drury Lane: but the case of Sir Samuel Romilly was the strangest of all. The clear-headed Chancery lawyer, with a leading practice, the future Lord Chancellor, the reformer of our criminal code, killed himself because his wife had died! Surely this was a kind of epidemic insanity! It has been ascribed by some to the practice of "cupping" for what is now called "tension"; the process of letting blood by the lancet depressed people so rapidly that they embraced the Stoic philosophy—"Fit aliquando et hujus rei nausea—Sooner or later one sickens of this thing."

I remain, Yours obediently,

A STOIC.

GERMAN PRISONERS TO AMERICA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

27 November, 1917.

SIR,—A large number of ships, after discharging American soldiers in Europe, might well be filled with German and Austrian prisoners on the return passage. In view of the intensity of submarine warfare and the careful discrimination of "U" boat commanders in selecting their quarry, the voyage might obtain the utmost safety and additional security to these vessels would then be secured. In case of a loss the enemy would have no reason to complain, we should bear it with equanimity, and the crew would be no worse off than if they were carrying any other cargo.

If, say, 500,000 of these men were put to work in America the bulk of them would after a time lose their Kaiser worship. The free air of America would have a marvellous effect upon them. On the return of peace most of them would desire to renounce their nationality and become useful American citizens, merging their lives in their new surroundings and helping to augment future American armies when and wherever required. The absorption of those young men into the great Commonwealth would ultimately be more profitable to that community than a money indemnity. Their loss to the Fatherland would be a blow to the Hohenzollern, and the threat of forfeiture of civil rights in the country of their birth would cause them but little grief. This idea, although repulsive at the moment, would after a generation lose its taint of abomination, and the fault of the blood would be merged and purified in the atmosphere of liberty. Three thousand miles of ocean would be a sufficient barrier to ensure a permanent separation, and many more thousands would be attracted later from Germany to join those they loved in their new surroundings of liberal and enlightened life.

The division of these immigrants into small units scattered over the vast American continent could be arranged in a way to prevent potential trouble such as exists in the semi-military organisation of the large and closely-knit German population in Brazil and other parts of South America. Here in these little islands we are too close to Germany and too small a community to retain these men; the works of their rulers stink in our nostrils, and the notion of offering them hospitality would be repulsive even to Sinn Feiners. The position of the Germans, too, would be different; they would probably feel much less security here than in America, where they would be starting a new existence under more favourable conditions. No doubt they would have to pass through some system of probation after the war before America would be satisfied to register them as citizens, but those who failed in this could be shipped back to their own country under the Government they deserved.—Your obedient servant,

November 27, 1917.

"LOOKER-ON."

REVIEWS.

A THEOLOGICAL FREE-LANCE.

Life and Letters of Stopford Brooke. By Lawrence Pearsall Jacks, M.A., Hon. LL.D., D.D., Principal of Manchester College, Oxford. 2 Vols. John Murray. 15s. net.

THESE two closely-packed volumes present an exhaustive study of a man whose name, if not exactly one of renown, has been in wide repute for over half-a-century. As long ago as 1865 it first attracted notice on the title-page of a biography which achieved immediate success, though it has nowadays fallen somewhat into oblivion. The book was the life of F. W. Robertson, the famous preacher, and its author was Stopford Brooke, a young clergyman of 33. When some years earlier entrusted with the work, Brooke was drudging as a curate in a squalid Marylebone parish, whither he had migrated from Ireland, where his father, a Protestant clergyman, held a small chaplaincy. Both the chaplain and his wife were well connected, and, in spite of narrow circumstances, the family lived in pleasant and refined surroundings. To the children of these parents many gifts were transmitted, of which Stopford received a generous share in the shape of striking talents, fine taste, and remarkably good looks. After a creditable but not particularly distinguished career at Trinity College, Dublin, resisting the allurements of an artist's vocation, he decided to take orders. In view of subsequent events it is important to note his mental attitude at this period, which is thus defined by his biographer: "One side of his nature belonged to religion, the other to art; two realms intimately related in the world of pure ideas, but often widely sundered, and even at variance in the actual lives of men. He possessed a deep natural piety, fostered by such influence and example as we have seen, and in respect of that we may say of him—*anima naturaliter christiana*. But his feet were firmly planted on the earth; no pagan ever loved it better or received from contact with the things of sense a fuller current of the joy of life."

With a mind thus dominated, Brooke entered the calling from which, after a prolonged spiritual ordeal, he eventually severed himself in form but not in essence. His start was hardly inspiring. London, his chosen sphere of action, was then (1857), from a religious point of view, at low-water mark. Perfunctoriness and apathy were almost universally prevalent. The clergy, from the highest dignitaries downwards, were for the most part dull formalists, without a spark of vitalising energy or influence, whose favourite pulpit theme was eternal punishment, and whose parochial duties were delegated to underpaid curates. In that much-enduring contingent Brooke now became a recruit, serving, first in Lisson Grove and then in Kensington, under exacting and unappreciative task-masters at a wage of little over a pound a week. But his heart was thoroughly in his work, and though his principals looked upon him as a doctrinal suspect, and were jealous of his success as a preacher, he won in full measure the esteem and devotion of the poorer parishioners. Outside his clerical duties he had a variety of mitigating interests, artistic and literary, while his acquaintance with his future father-in-law, Mr. Wentworth Beaumont, had, in conjunction with Irish introductions, procured for him an *entrée* into a distinguished section of London society, of which his letters give several vivid glimpses. Two of these are particularly interesting, and should not be overlooked by historians of the period. Writing to his brother William in August, 1857, of a reception at Vernon Smith's, he says: "Lady Palmerston was there. They say she is one of the cleverest women in the world. I watched her for a long time. A large woman, dressed all in black, with one diamond brooch in her hair. A large, courteous face, with command therein, and, I could not help thinking, a quiet, feminine reflection of her husband in it—just his look as he gets up to silence an objector. It was quite a picture to see her reception of the Prussian Minister—a tall, large, florid man, starred and beribboned, with a small imperial, and no whiskers or other hair. She took his

hand as she was sitting, and bowed thrice slightly over it, with a sort of condescending grace which said: 'It is not the man but the representative I welcome.' Very quiet and dignified she was. Everyone rose when she went away."

Those were the days of Lord Palmerston's first Administration, which seemed impregnable, but in less than six months it was overthrown, and Lady Palmerston ceased for a time to be the recipient of profound drawing-room homage. The debate which resulted in the fall of the Derby Ministry in March, 1859, prompted another lively description, Disraeli triumphantly figuring as the hero of the occasion: "A gentleman told me that in asking a member what was thought of Gladstone's speech he said: 'By George! it was the most astonishing speech—there was not a point on which he did not touch, and that with the most splendid eloquence; but he so confused them all, so wrapt them in a maze of words, so distributed them under various lights, that not a single member in the House knew what he had said when he sat down! . . . Major S. asked me what I thought of Disraeli's speech. I said it was the calmest, sublimest, and noblest piece of statesmanlike oratory I had ever read. Major S. replied that I had not said more than D.'s brilliant enemies were saying . . . that he astonished everyone; that in '52 D. had died like a cat, scratching all round, and now—when he rose he could not speak for ten minutes, the cheering was so great, and that when he sat down there was 'solemn applause'; they were silent almost in the presence of such a torrent of genius and strength."

Prolonged service in the capacity of curate is intolerable even to a commonplace clergyman, and after five years, so to speak, Brooke determined to improve his position. He had little to expect from his Kensington vicar, who, besides being far from pleased at the popularity of his sermons, was becoming increasingly uneasy as to the soundness of his doctrine. Consequently Brooke received no offers of preferment, and, rather than remain any longer stranded, he determined to apply for the newly-created post of Chaplain to the British Embassy at Berlin. This was in 1862; the Liberals were in power, and, his father-in-law being of that party, was no doubt able to command some interest on his behalf. He could also count on the influence of the Crown Princess (afterwards the Empress Frederick), who appears to have received favourable accounts of him, and, to the astonishment of his unappreciative chief, he received the appointment. His stay at Berlin was a dismal episode in his otherwise bright career. With the exception of the Crown Princess, of whom he necessarily saw very little, and Robert Morier, there was scarcely a being with whom he felt in sympathy. In 1865 he resigned and returned to London. There one or two influential friends took up his cause, notably Dean Stanley and Mr. H. S. King, the publisher, but no suitable preferment was forthcoming. Tait, then Bishop of the diocese, was kindly, but there were rumours afloat as to Brooke's unsoundness on Eternal Punishment, and the Bishop felt bound to interview him on the subject. "And now, Mr. Brooke," he inquired, "what is it that you have been recently saying about Eternal Punishment?" Brooke's reply was frankly explicit, but, judging from Tait's expression that he was not altogether a bigot in the matter, he boldly fired a return shot with the question: "And now, my Lord, will you be so good as to tell me what *you* think of Eternal Punishment?" "Perhaps we had better not discuss the subject," was the prudent reply.

Failing preferment, Brooke decided to rent St. James' Chapel, a dingy little conventicle of the type immortalised in Thackeray's 'Newcomes.' The resemblance to Charles Honeyman's famous Mayfair establishment was, in fact, complete, even the wine-vaults not being wanting. There, as is well known, Brooke rapidly won distinction as an able and eloquent preacher. Stanley took care that the Queen should hear of him, and he paid more than one visit to Windsor, where his sermons created a highly favourable impression, resulting in his

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THE HISTORY OF THE
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appointment as one of the Royal Chaplains. He gives extremely interesting descriptions of his interviews with Queen Victoria, revealing her in a far more attractive light than that in which she usually appeared on such occasions. If she could have had her way, he would have received a Westminster canonry, for which she twice proposed him, but Gladstone objected on theological and Disraeli on political grounds. Brooke, however, was approaching a stage in his career when such things were to be of no account. For fifteen years after his return from Berlin he had been chafing more and more at his spiritual fetters, and in 1880, unable any longer to endure the bondage, he calmly and without parade exchanged it for the paths of freedom.

There can be no doubt that, constituted as he was, he took the right course. The narrow-minded were shocked, while those of broader vision, yet prone to a temporising policy, blamed him for precipitate action. Stanley, when he perceived that the crisis was impending, urged that "the Church was broadening to meet his position." "Will it broaden sufficiently," replied Brooke, "to admit James Martineau being made Archbishop of Canterbury?" "Not in our time," rejoined Stanley. "Then," said Brooke, "I leave the Church of England." The effect of his emancipation was, his biographer tells us, "a liberation of mental, moral, spiritual energy. The freedom which he won was the freedom for the unrestricted expression of his own personality, and his whole nature rushed forward in a fresh outburst of prophetic fire and creative imagination. The years that followed were years of intense and many-sided activity." How they were spent is vividly recorded in these fascinating volumes, which render loving homage to a character somewhat complex, and tinged with an element of Epicureanism, but of rare purity and radiance.

SLAP-DASH HISTORY.

Church and State in England to the Death of Queen Anne. By Henry Melvill Gwatkin. Longmans. 15s.

UP to the Hanoverian era the history of England and the history of the Church of England are inextricable. But "the Church" (as in *Magna Carta*) meant the spirituality, *ceux de seynt eglise*, and "churchman" meant ecclesiastic. Spirituality and temporality, as in the Statute of Appeals, were not two interacting bodies or communities, but two sets of officials of "this Church and realm"—of course it was not questioned that the former had a divine commission. The mediæval theory survived the Reformation, and was maintained by Hooker and by Laud, though the break up of religious unity was making it impossible. The modern Arnoldian broad-churchman would fain save it by subordinating "Church" to "State," on the basis of a diluted "national" and undenominational Christianity.

There are practically four conceptions of the relation of religion to the national life: (1) The Church-State of Hildebrandine clericalism; (2) the State-Church of Erastian establishmentism; (3) the Church-and-State of historic Christianity; and (4) the State and the Church of the secularising Liberationist. The last has never yet realised his pure ideal: did not President Wilson the other day proclaim a day of national prayer? The first conception has been realised in the Papal States, by the Pilgrim fathers, and by missionaries. The second has only been approximated to, for Erastus himself was no Erastian in the Hobbesist sense, always postulating that the civil magistrate professes Christianity. Finally, a quasi-sacramental union of Church and State, resembling that of soul and body, has held the field from Constantine till to-day, always with some friction and now with increasing strain.

Professor Gwatkin's standpoint is that of the old-

fashioned Erastian Liberalism, the time-honoured John Bull "stand-no-ecclesiastical-nonsense" attitude. As a scamper through English history this posthumous work, edited by Dr. E. W. Watson, is clever. Here and there we find shrewd remarks and phrases. But, whereas the modern historian strives painfully to be coldly neutral, Gwatkin's bias was so vehement that he seldom troubles to argue, or even to be accurate. On page 143 he confuses the Coronation Oath and the Accession Declaration; on page 193 the baptismal robe is styled a "chrism," instead of "chrisom"; Sacheverell's November 5th discourse is called, on page 385, "a fanatic sermon on King Charles the Martyr." The *communicatio idiomatum*, which the fathers discuss is alleged to be "a peculiar Lutheran doctrine." Bishops, it is said, "have their authority from the Pope, and are nothing but Papal delegates," a position flatly contradicted by a modern Papal bull. Again, it is very doubtful whether Grosseteste ever wrote, "I disobey, resist and rebel," or whether Pius IV offered to sanction the 1559 Prayer Book.

The Prayer Book was declared by Elizabeth to contain nothing that Rome could object to, and the Puritans furiously denounced it as old-written, rotten stuff, abstracted out of the Pope's blasphemous mass-book. At any rate it had, and has, certain "sacerdotal" features which a Dixie Professor might be expected to recognise, if regretfully. We seem, however, to be reading an argument by Mr. Kensit or the late Bishop Ryle. Thus, the rubric says that the Edwardian vestures "shall be retained and be in use," and Dr. Gwatkin comments: "Were this modern English, it would be 'insane' to put on it any other meaning than 'shall continue to be used.' But, being sixteenth-century English, the words may equally well mean, 'shall be retained in safe custody and be in trust.'"

His treatment of auricular confession is still more drastic. It might have been thought that nothing could be plainer than the first Communion exhortation, with the 113th canon imposing penalties on the revealing of anything told in confession, to say nothing of the commission to remit and retain sins conveyed in the ordination of a priest. But Dr. Gwatkin argues that "open his grief" means "state that he has a grievance," and "receive the benefit of absolution" means, receive an assurance which is as good as absolution. "Absolution he cannot then receive, for the Church of England has deliberately withdrawn all authority to pronounce an absolution over an individual, except in the Visitation of the Sick." The Professor omits the words in the latter office "shall be moved" to make a private confession. Speaking of the initial Sacrament, he observes that the Prayer Book no longer states that infants are saved by baptism, the word "thereby" in the 1536 Article having been omitted; but he fails to notice that the words "which are baptised" have been inserted after "children." Again, if wafer-bread was "abolished" in 1559, why did the Puritans in 1572 petition against it? But on all these liturgical points Gwatkin was contemptuously unscholarly. Tractarianism was "the backwash of the Reform Bill," and, if it had the Prayer Book on its side, so much the worse for the Prayer Book.

To turn to generalities. By citing only one set of facts a plausible case can be made out for the thesis of a State-made Church, accepting its faith and discipline slavishly from Parliament. But every historian knows that there is another set of facts, beginning with the Statute of Appeals, wholly inconsistent with Erastian theory. If Episcopacy since the Reformation has only been "orderly government," it is strange that, as against the contention of the Tudor Commons that bishops might be made by letters patent, the apostolic succession was, as Gwatkin himself observes, "carefully and scrupulously preserved." "Elizabeth had no

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mind to share the supremacy with Parliament." But her angry message to the Commons was that "no Bills concerning religion be read unless the same were considered and liked by the clergy." The Long Parliament constituted itself *summus episcopus*, but at the Restoration the new Prayer Book was accepted by Parliament from Convocation undebated. After the Revolution the refusal of Convocation to discuss liturgical changes at once quenched William's Comprehension Bill. A century later, in the nadir of Church theory, Bishop Horsley told the Lords that an Act voiding the ministerial character of persons ordained below a certain age would be spiritually null and void. Undoubtedly the constitutional position of the Church of England is a muddled one—like everything English. But that "the Church is divine by appointment independent of the State" was certainly not a theory invented by the Tory Highfliers of Anne's time.

We do not in the least mind history being written Whiggishly—the world is used to it; and, as there can be no such thing as statements of facts but only interpretations of facts, every historian must approach his subject with a certain bias. But Lord Morley is a Radical, yet treats great topics with fairness and philosophy, not like a Hyde Park lecturer. After all, we can afford at this distance of time to estimate historic characters and causes judicially, calmly, and sympathetically. We do not nowadays, says Lord Morley, dismiss Cromwell as an unprincipled hypocrite, Laud as a narrow bigot, or Charles as a tyrant. Charles was only a theoriser (i.e., an idealist); he had law and precedent, Morley remarks, on his side, but should have known, in circumstances of extraordinary difficulty, how to yield to changed times. He was like the stiffly conscientious father whose growing sons are demanding their own latch-key. The situation lends itself to endless controversy. Gwatkin approached it, however, in the spirit of a Calves' Head Club pamphleteer. He defends the massacre of Drogheda—what is to be said about the slaughter of a hundred women after Naseby?—and the hideous persecution carried on by the New England settlers till 1663 is only referred to in the phrase, "they longed to shape a commonwealth in godly fashion." We are told nothing of the refusal of the Puritans to minister to any in their flocks but a coterie of the elect, nor yet that Laud was charged at his trial with teaching that Christ died for all men. Contrast with the professorial, stereotyped picture of a grave and noble Puritanism the contemptuous estimate of monasticism, even in its purest days, when it was the pioneer of all civilisation. At a later date it "provided for the unholy persons of both sexes who were most conveniently placed in holy retirement." Where is the impartiality or breadth of view to be found in these pages which is looked for from a serious historian? It is quite with surprise that the reader comes upon a kindly portraiture of Queen Anne, and upon a panegyric of the Caroline episcopate. By that time "the Church was really the Church of the nation," and the people loved it. This is truly remarkable if its career had hitherto been all that is here depicted.

To turn from Dr. Gwatkin, we do not remember seeing in any historian mention of the admiring attitude of the Reformers towards King John, because of his anti-Papalism. Thus Simon Fish, in 'A Supplication for the Beggars,' denounces the blood-sucking prelates "that thus cruelly coulde punissh such a righteous prince . . . this good and blisshed being of great compassion." Henry VIII produced a copy from his bosom. But throughout that century Protestantism and arbitrary power were queerly connected, both having the same enemy.

MAGAZINES.

Blackwood is excellent as usual. 'Battle: An Infantry Subaltern's Confessions,' by Mr. Edward Liveing, is full of vivid touches. It ranges from the eve of expectation and the horror of the first casualties due to shells to the conflict and the wounding of the writer and his escape, more by intuition than conscious reasoning, out of a desperate position. In 'Parliament and Prices,' Miss Katharine Doughty gives a useful summary of the measures of the

past, showing that from the earliest times Parliament has continually controlled both prices and wages. Mr. Clouston finishes his remarkable story of 'The Spy in Black,' and in 'A Greenway Christmas' Mr. Homes gives us a further glimpse of one of the most striking writers the war has produced. We like the verse 'Nightmare' of a Council of Democracy, which has something of the lilt of Bret Harte, and we are glad to see in 'Musings without Method' a tribute to that excellent man of letters Charles Keary.

The **National Review** this month presents its readers with a large coloured map of the entire Western Front. "Student" has some useful remarks on 'Strategists: Amateur and Professional,' and 'Ambulator' contributes a eulogy of 'Lord Northcliffe in America.' Mr. Austin Dobson's account of 'An Eighteenth Century Hippocrates' is charming, and deals with a charming man, the Heberden whom Johnson called "Ultimus Romanorum," and who a classic himself, was the friend and supporter of learned classics. Mr. Edgar Preston has a good subject in 'War Words,' and uses his material well, though a philologist could give him some hints.

In the **Nineteenth Century** Mr. Leslie Urquhart has an interesting article on 'Some Russian Realities.' He states that "The revolution so far has been grossly artificial. Those who seized power do not represent Russia and the Russian people," since "the real Russia is the 85 per cent. of the population who live on the land." The writer expects the Cossacks to play a great part among a people who have learnt a few bitter lessons, and thinks a Military Dictatorship a certainty. Mr. Sidney Low's article on 'The Invasion of Italy and the Classic Strategy of Prussia' is one of the best in the number. He concludes with a plea for unity of control and action among the air forces, which are one of our main hopes next year. Lady Paget makes the best of the character of Francis Joseph in 'The Lonely Emperor,' admitting his weakness as a man and a sovereign. We can see little in Mr. A. S. Herbert's talk about Ireland and the Convention, or in 'Shakspeare, Bacon, and a "Tertium Quid"' by Mr. H. B. Simpson, whose summary of the question is hardly fair to the orthodox position. Edith Picton-Turbervill has a candid discussion of 'Christianity and the Church,' and Mr. H. P. Robinson makes some interesting revelations concerning 'War Correspondents and Their Work.' Under the title 'The Ocean, the State, and the Fisherman,' Mr. Moreton Frewen supplies remarkable evidence of a source of food which has been generally neglected in this country. His figures for America show the generous returns for the outlay in money.

'Russia's Eclipse,' by Dr. E. J. Dillon, is one of the important articles in this month's **Fortnightly**. He tells us that "M. Kerensky is a dreamer of dreams and a weaver of words. He has unbounded faith in phrases, and his skill in turning them is marvellous. Having delivered a telling speech on a problem, he feels that he has solved it." Mr. Archibald Hurd in 'The Riddle of the War,' emphasises again the point that "the brilliant exhibit which the British Fleet has made in this war is not understood," and adds that "sea-power seldom manifests itself dramatically." Discussing 'Sir Horace Plunkett, Sinn Féin and the Irish Situation,' Mr. John McGrath does not carry us far. Has the Convention really achieved a miracle yet? Mr. Arnold Bennett answers the question 'Are We a Thrifty Race?' by a yes, due to the efforts of the National War Savings Committee. There are some useful facts and striking conclusions in Mr. J. D. Whelpley's article on 'The American Embargo.'

The **Cornhill** is lucky in getting for this month "Two Letters to a Painter from W. M. Thackeray," by Lady Ritchie, who supplies a charming setting to them. The letters were written to Frank Stone from Paris in 1835 and 1837. At the earlier date Thackeray was still thinking of art as a career, but by 1837 he had got into newspaper work as his main business, though still hankering after recognition for his drawings. Otherwise the feature of the number is its capital stories, connected mostly with the war. George A. Birmingham has a sprightly account of 'The Leave Boat,' and 'The Tale of Toti' is a fine tribute to Italian valour.

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THE CITY.

The interest in all things Egyptian continues, and there is a large business being done in the Shares of the principal Land Companies, such as Aboukir, New Egyptian, and Delta Land. Reports are now coming in showing that the cotton crop for 1917-18 will practically reach $6\frac{1}{2}$ million cantars, with such a yield at the present prices, which is in the neighbourhood of £9-£10 per cantar, it will be easily understood that the financial position of the country was never more favourable, and the Mortgage Banks, and other Financial Institutions are overwhelmed with money. The balance sheets of the various Companies will show that the arrears of Annuities at the end of the year will be negligible.

As to the future, the Government's decision to restrict the Cotton area for 1918, will mean that the area under cotton in the Delta will be reduced by between 2 and 300,000 feddans, but whether this curtailment of Egypt's staple industry will seriously affect the position of the Country remains to be seen.

The chief interest in Land Companies has been centred in New Egyptians, the price of its shares, within the last few months, having risen from 10s. to 15s. 9d.

This Company is in the favourable position of having a large area of cultivable land ready for sale, and by all reports, large areas have been sold to the fellahen at very satisfactory prices. The decision of the Directors to insist on the payment of 40 per cent. of the sale price on the signing of the Deed by the Purchasers is a wise one, and safeguards the Company against the accumulation of Arrears of Annuities.

We understand that the reports from the various Estates of this Company show most satisfactory progress. The payment for the Leases of the 1917 crop have practically all been settled, and large sums have been received on account of the 1918 Leases. The greater part of the cotton crop was picked by the end of October, and this year's crop has given better results than those of 1916, both as regards quantity and quality.

As far as this Company's own lands are concerned, the restriction of the cotton area has little or no effect on the prospects of the concern, as since the war the Company has wisely followed the triennial rotation for cotton.

Judging from the annual reports of three Russian oil companies which have just come to hand for 1916, the worst fate that can befall a Russian oil company at the present time is to be making increased profits. Profit-making, to be sure, is practically impossible, because a maximum price is fixed for oil by the Government at a level quite inadequate to encompass the enormous rise in wages and cost of materials. The price of oil has been raised twice, from 45 to 60 and then to 96 copecks per pood, during 1917; but wages have multiplied four to five times since the war began; so a producer has to be in an exceptionally fine position in order to be able to show profits. The North Caucasian Oilfields Co. was in such a position in 1916. Owing to the prolific character of existing wells, and not to any acceleration of drilling, it obtained a large increase in output and made a profit of 7,160,059 roubles, being an increase of 1,716,175 roubles over the 1915 result. Converted into sterling at the rate of 16 roubles to the £, this becomes £447,504 (it would have been £716,000 at the old normal rate). But the Russian Government in June last revised its taxation laws retrospectively in a manner which renders it possible for the State to take 90 per cent. of the profits. Consequently the directors have set aside the sum of £340,037 for taxes, and after expenses, depreciation and further loss on exchange have been allowed for, there is a miserable balance of £10,616 out of profits approaching £450,000.

Truly a deplorable state of affairs. But that is not all. The directors pay the preference dividend and carry forward £6,138, with the cautionary note that no allowance has been made for British excess profits tax for the last three years, as the amount has not been computed, but they are appealing against an assessment of £84,900 for excess profits in 1914. They expect sympathetic treatment in the circumstances; and they need it, for the Gilbertian position is arising where it is a far, far better thing to have a loss than a profit, because from him that hath a profit shall be taken, even that which he hath not. The Spies Petroleum Co., which operates on the same field as the North Caucasian, is in a somewhat better position. Its output, fortunately, declined, its net revenue in roubles being 2,956,029 against 4,720,674 roubles for the preceding year. By the time this has been converted into sterling at 16 roubles to the £, there is a further diminution, and the directors may congratulate themselves on the fact that though they cannot pay a dividend to the shareholders, they are not called upon to provide an exorbitant sum for taxation. The position of the New Schibaieff Petroleum Co. is apparently somewhat similar. Owing to delays in communications precise details are lacking, and taxation, depreciation and costs are lumped together in one sum of 1,105,000 roubles, which leave a net profit of only 140,000 roubles out of 1,245,000 roubles gross profit. In this instance the English company, which owns all the shares and debentures of the operating company in Russia, has an income in the form of interest on debentures and loans, and, London expenses being low, there is a profit of £11,118 for the year. But this is swept up before the shareholders can get any of it. The English company has 1,536,590 roubles lying in Russia, and as the value of the rouble has fallen, they were worth at the date of the report £56,520 less than their original book value. Hence, instead of a profit the company shows a deficit of £21,309.

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Allusion to the present War, of which the writer published a fore-
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park, with a lament that aviation should be devoted to man's
destruction instead of conversion, etc., etc.

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ANGLO-PERSIAN OIL.

THE EIGHTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, Limited, was held on Monday, Mr. Charles Greenway, chairman and managing director, presiding.

The Chairman said: Gentlemen—The directors' report, balance-sheet, and profit and loss account having been duly circulated, we will, with your permission, follow the usual course of taking them as read. I am pleased to say that there has been some acceleration, about five weeks, in the presentation of the accounts this year, but they would have been submitted a month earlier had it not been for the postal delays now occurring. In the future, subject of course, to postal irregularities, I hope we may be able to submit them not later than in the month of October in each year.

I will now ask you to kindly give your attention to the printed figures. Dealing first with the balance-sheet, you will see that the paid-up capital stood at £3,250,000, being an increase of £250,000 upon the figures of the previous year, due to the payment by His Majesty's Government of a further call of that amount. This payment brought the total amount of capital provided by the Government up to £1,251,000, leaving a balance of £949,000 still due out of the £2,200,000 which they undertook to provide by the agreement of 1914. This balance they have, as mentioned in the report, recently paid. I may mention that, in addition to £199,000 of Debenture stock which has been issued to the Government in respect of a portion of the payment to which I have just referred, we have issued a further £1,400,000 of that stock, bringing our total Debenture issue at date up to £2,000,000. Including these Debentures, the total capital now issued amounts to £6,000,000. Beyond these Debentures we have no liabilities outstanding, either in respect of our recent large acquisitions of shares or on any other account, excepting the contingent liability of £209,741 2s. 2d. to the Burmah Oil Company, other than the usual liabilities to trade creditors, which are more than offset by the amount due to us by sundry debtors. The other items on the debit side are self-explanatory, and do not, I think, need any comment.

Coming to the credit side of the account, you will see that there has been an increase of about £200,000 in the first item, this being due to additional shares which have been taken up in our subsidiary companies to provide the further capital required by them from time to time for necessary developments. The item of "refinery, tank installations, pipe lines, etc.," also shows an increase of about £145,000, this representing the outlay on the various large extensions which were carried out during the year, less the depreciation on the whole which has been written off. The only other item in this account requiring comment is the claim against the Persian Government for the losses sustained by this company, owing to the rising of Persian tribesmen in 1915. As you will see, those losses have now been ascertained to have amounted to the large total of £402,887 3s. 1d., and a claim has been lodged against the Persian Government for the payment of this amount. The further claims of our producing companies for losses sustained by them on the fields amount to £211,602, making a total of £614,489 3s. 1d. due to us by the Persian Government, and it is perhaps superfluous for me to say that had it not been for this destruction of property by Persian tribesmen the profits of the Anglo-Persian Company during the past two financial years would, to the extent that the claims represent loss of revenue, have been correspondingly greater.

Turning to the profit and loss account, you will see that the trading profit for the year amounted to £415,827 5s. 10d., as against £171,723 1s. 4d. in the previous year, which fully confirms the anticipations expressed by me when I last had the pleasure of addressing you. This result has been arrived at after making a very liberal allowance for depreciation, and in view of the fact, to which attention is drawn in the report, that this profit only includes a very small benefit from the capital invested by His Majesty's Government, I think it may be considered as eminently satisfactory.

During the current year we shall be deriving the full benefit of the extensions which have been carried out with the first half of this capital, and the year is now sufficiently advanced for me to be able to say with confidence that the trading profit shown in our next accounts will not be less than £800,000, and will probably be nearer £1,000,000. And this profit, gentlemen, I would particularly like to emphasise, can in no sense be regarded as "war profit," inasmuch as practically the whole of our products were either contracted for before the war, or, in the case of those contracted for since, have been sold at pre-war prices.

Mr. Walter Long recently in the House of Commons said that "oil is probably more important than anything else; you may have men, munitions and money, but if you have not got oil all other advantages will be of comparatively little value." Of this fact there can be no gainsaying. Although it has only recently come home to the minds of the people of this country, a nation which again enters into war without an ample supply, absolutely free from foreign control, of fuel oil for the service of its navy and mercantile fleet, of benzine for its motor transport and aircraft, of oil for the lubrication of the many mechanical appliances which so largely enter into modern warfare, and of aromatic hydro-carbons for the manufacture of high explosives, will be committing an act of madness.

In connection with the commercial aspects of the company's business, I will now refer to the important development which has recently taken place in the purchase of the shares of the German companies known as the British Petroleum Company, Ltd., the Homelight Oil Company, Ltd., and the Petroleum Steamship Company, Ltd. The two former are what is known in the trade as distributing companies, and their organisations will, later on, when our present arrangements for the sale of benzine and kerosene come to an end, doubtless prove a most valuable acquisition, as they will provide a means of disposing of our output of these products at much better prices than we are realising at present, for without such an organisation oil companies have necessarily to surrender to intermediaries a large portion of the profits realised in the sale of their products. These companies have, unfortunately, owing to the arrangements which have been made by the Board of Trade for the regulation of petroleum supplies, with a view to economising man power and tonnage, had to abandon their share of the benzine trade of this country for the period of the war.

They are, however, continuing their trade in kerosene, obtaining their supplies from the same sources as before, and will, in the meantime, make all necessary arrangements for resuming their business in benzine after the conclusion of the war, on a scale that will ensure their securing a substantial share of the trade of the United Kingdom. In this connection I may mention that the company's production of benzine is now at the rate of about 150,000 tons per annum, and will, by the time our extensions are completed, probably amount to 600,000 to 700,000 tons per annum. This may appear to be a very large figure compared to the United Kingdom's pre-war trade of less than 400,000 tons per annum, but with the very large increase in motor transport of all kinds which will certainly take place in this country and in Europe generally after the conclusion of the war, and to the entirely new demand which will have been created by the great development in aviation, I have not the slightest doubt that there will then be an offset for all the benzine and all the benzol which the world will be able to produce.

The purchase of the shares in the Petroleum Steamship Company, Ltd., has given us an addition of nine tankers to our fleet, which, as mentioned in the report, now numbers twenty-two vessels, of a deadweight capacity of 130,915 tons. In addition to these, we are managing nine other tankers, of a deadweight capacity of 74,500 tons, bringing the total number of boats now being run by us up to thirty-one, of a deadweight capacity of 205,415 tons. This fleet, though large, will not nearly suffice for our future requirements, and will need to be augmented considerably whenever it may be practicable to purchase or build additional tonnage.

Our new 10-in. pipe-line was completed in January last, and has since been working very satisfactorily. Unfortunately, however, a serious fire at our pumping station at Tembi in July last, which was, I regret to say, accompanied by the loss of the life, under particularly heroic circumstances, of our chief engineer there, Mr. R. L. Lindsay, has partly deprived us for the time being of the use of our small line, but we are still able to deliver to Abadan all the oil that our refineries will be capable of dealing with until our extensions are completed.

In order that you may better appreciate the extent of the oil territory included in our concession, I have had a map hung up for exhibition, and after the meeting I shall be pleased if the shareholders will examine it, and I shall be glad to give them any explanation they may desire regarding it. From what I have said now and on former occasions you will, I think, be able to appreciate that, so far as the supplies of crude oils are concerned, there is, so far as can be judged, practically no limit to our potentialities. The only limits are (1) refineries and (2) outlets for our manufactured products. The first of these is, in these days of shortage of steel, our principal difficulty, but we shall lose no opportunity of pushing on with the erection of further refineries until we are in a position to more adequately deal with the enormous supplies of crude which we have available. As regards the second limitation—viz., outlets for our products, there is, as I have already indicated, little to fear.

One other point of importance in connection with our crude which I should not pass over is that it is of an exceptionally high grade, and much superior to the average of the oils produced on the American continent. It contains a very large percentage of benzine and kerosene of the best quality, excellent lubricating oils, fuel oil of very high thermal efficiency, and a good percentage of first-rate paraffin wax. This means that our crude is much more valuable than that of most of the producing fields of the world, whilst its cost of production, inasmuch as it is all obtained from flowing wells of big volume, entailing the minimum of field expenditure, is much lower. These advantages, I may say, far more than compensate for any disadvantage at which we may be placed in freight as compared with fields which may be more favourably situated geographically for supplying the European markets.

I now beg to move: "That the report of the directors, balance-sheet and profit and loss account for the year ended March 31st, 1917, be received, approved and adopted," and I will ask Lord Inchcape to kindly second this motion; but before putting the resolution to the meeting I shall be glad to answer to the best of my power any questions you may desire to put.

Lord Inchcape, G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., seconded the resolution.

BROOME (Selangor) RUBBER.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Broome (Selangor) Rubber Plantations, Ltd., was held on Tuesday, Lieut. Joseph Kelly, R.N.A.S., chairman and managing director, presiding.

The Chairman said: Gentlemen,—I will deal briefly with the accounts for the past year, which ended on the 30th June last. The accounts are set out pretty clearly and, I think, show the very satisfactory progress made during the past year. The net profit, after providing for depreciation and all expenses, amounts to £24,827 2s. 5d. This figure shows an increase of over £11,000, as compared with the preceding year's working. After adding to the net profit for the past year the balance brought forward from the last account, there is the sum of £28,025 13s. 7d. standing to the credit of profit and loss account. In April last we distributed an interim dividend of 6 per cent., leaving available for consideration to-day £20,309 13s. 7d. Your directors propose that the sum of £5,000 be transferred to reserve, and that a final dividend of 9 per cent. (making 15 per cent. for the year) be paid, leaving £3,735 13s. 7d. to carry forward to the next account. This carry forward should more than cover any excess profits duty for which we may be liable. With regard to the cost of production, it is slightly higher than that of last year, but you are undoubtedly aware of the present high figure at which freight and insurance premiums now stand. In spite, however, of these adverse circumstances, your directors consider that we have done exceedingly well and quite up to expectations. The crop obtained was 383,579 lbs., and realised a gross average price of 2s. 8.61d. per lb. It is owing to this excellent crop and the very good selling price obtained that we are able to put before you such a satisfactory showing. The planted area remains at 1,637 acres, and until after the war your directors think it well to devote their energies to keeping the rubber we have got in good condition rather than to the development of more land, which I may say is their ultimate objective.

With regard to the current year it is not possible to make any forecast, and we can only hope that we shall do as well as we have been doing during the year we are now reviewing. You will see from the report that the manager expects to obtain 450,000 lbs. up to next June, but this figure is given with due reserve, and is subject to the difficulties under which we are labouring nowadays, both as regards freight, which is our chief difficulty, and labour. You will recollect that in the early days of the company, when the adjustment of the acreage was settled, 2,675 shares were surrendered. Practically the whole of these shares have been sold since the accounts were made up, and the amount of cash realised is roughly £4,000. Our cash position is therefore strengthened by this amount, which item will figure in our next account. I think, gentlemen, that perhaps you would like to know how we stand with respect to excess profits duty. As the secretaries are at present in negotiation over the matter with the income tax authorities, I would request you to avoid any discussion concerning it for the moment. The secretaries will only be too pleased to let you know the result when it has been definitely arranged if you care either to write or to call at the office. However, I can assure you that our carry-forward of £3,700 odd will be much more than sufficient to meet any liability under this heading. Our manager, Mr. Paul, and his assistants have done excellent service, and the directors wish to record their appreciation of their efforts in the company's interests. We are also indebted to our Eastern agents, Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield, of Kuala Lumpur, who control the administration of the estates in the East. I do not think that I need detain you further, and will now formally move: "That the reports of the directors and auditors for the year ended 30th June, 1917, as submitted to the meeting be and are hereby approved and adopted, and that a final dividend of 9 per cent., less tax, be paid forthwith."

Mr. John Gaynor seconded the resolution.

Mr. R. H. Frost asked whether it was necessary to place as much as £5,000 to reserve. The dividend was satisfactory, and he would be sorry to complain; at the same time, the shareholders might have had more. He presumed, however, that the reason for transferring £5,000 to reserve was that it was better not to declare too large a dividend in view of the excess profits duty.

The Chairman said that it was necessary in these times to have a fairly large sum of ready cash at the company's disposal. It was possible that in the immediate future they might have some difficulty in transmitting money to the East, and therefore it was necessary to keep a fairly large amount there in case of any difficulty of that sort.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

BAHIA BLANCA & NORTH-WESTERN.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Bahia Blanca and North-Western Railway Company, Ltd., was held on 29th November, the Right Hon. Lord St. Davids, the Chairman, presiding.

The Chairman said: Gentlemen, I presume you will take the report and accounts as read. I beg to move:—"That the report of the directors and the statement of accounts now presented be and they are hereby received and adopted." As you well know, you are not dependent on the results of the working for your dividend, but upon the rental paid by the Pacific Company under the terms of the working agreement, which has been duly received in respect of the year to 30th June last. From 1st July last the guaranteed stock bears interest at 4½ per cent., at which it is fixed permanently. Last year when I addressed you here I told you that the crops along your line were promising well, but down south and on the Toay line they were much in need of rain. They did not get all the rain they wanted, with the result that we had a poor harvest. I also mentioned that the receipts should benefit from the grain held up in our stations and at our port at Bahia Blanca owing to shortage in steamer tonnage. That such was the case is plainly shown by the monthly figures of the traffic receipts on page 2 of the report, where you will see that for the first six months—July to December—they were well above the average of the previous four years; but on the year the receipts are less than any of the others, except 1913-14. The receipts were helped by cattle traffic, as animals had to be moved about owing to lack of pasture, and, although the number of cattle carried was less than in 1915-16, the receipts were £12,405 greater.

As regards the current year, our latest cable now states that the prospects for the harvest over the system worked by the Pacific Company are very good indeed, but unfortunately one of the districts where prospects are not so good is along the Nueve Roma line from Bahia Blanca to Catriló, but rains in the next few days would greatly improve the crop outlook. For some time past the railway companies have been urging the Government for an increase of tariffs, and it has been agreed that all railways should increase their tariffs as from 20th November last by 22 per cent. If these were normal times I should feel very hopeful that the receipts of this line for the present year would turn out very well, but whether they do so is entirely dependent on there being sufficient ships calling at Argentine ports to take the grain. Gentlemen, I beg to move the adoption of the report, and I will ask Mr. Goudge to second it.

Mr. J. A. Goudge seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

LONDON-AMERICAN MARITIME.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the London-American Maritime Trading Company was held on Thursday, the Earl of Wemyss, the chairman, presiding.

In moving the adoption of the report and accounts, the Chairman said that under present circumstances it would be folly to attempt to forecast the future or the profits of the future. All the directors could do was to take advantage of the few opportunities of profit which occurred, and in the letter and the spirit to support those obligations and restrictions which the Government thought it necessary to impose upon trading. It was impossible to over-estimate the part played by the mercantile marine in the worst part of the war. The Company's fleet had had its full share of losses by submarines. Four ships had been sunk and two damaged, and fifteen lives lost. When the Company started business all the ships were under time charter—an excellent arrangement when freights were low, but when freights were high they were unable to take advantage of that fact, while an enormous sum had to be paid for insurance. In the past year this outlay was £100,000, but the Government had taken over all war risks on requisitioned vessels, and this expenditure would, he hoped, be materially lightened in the next year. The cost of running these ships was enormous, and the position was therefore very difficult. At the time of last year's meeting the outstanding debentures were £169,945. On July 31st, 1917, they were £81,880, and on September 25th £66,750. At that date the Company deposited £72,000 for the redemption of all debentures. Against the reduction of debentures they had obtained an advance from their bankers of £81,000, now reduced to £72,500. From profit and loss account they transferred £20,000 to reserve for contingencies; and they had also a general reserve of £20,000 and a special reserve of £90,000. Of the last, however, he feared that excess profits tax (the amount of which was not yet ascertained) would absorb by far the greater part. Therefore the reserves they could count upon at present might be called £86,000. The large item of £185,785 for sundry creditors was perfectly good; it consisted of claims which the Government had not yet settled for insurance of vessels sunk. The result of the year's trading was an available balance of £41,331 4s. 11d. after transferring the £20,000 to reserve. They had already paid to the ordinary shareholders a dividend of 5 per cent., which, with the 7 per cent. on the cumulative and participating preference shares, left £28,831 4s. 11d. at their disposal. The directors promised to pay a further and final dividend of 7 per cent. on the ordinary shares, which would require £10,000, and there would remain a balance of £16,331 4s. 11d. to be carried forward.

The motion was passed unanimously.

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